NEA Today
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THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

WHY PUBLIC SCHOOLS?
See insert inside

CAN WE TALK?

How Peer Mediation Reduces School Violence

see page 10

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

The Battle Is Joined

We should be fighting mad. Public education, today, has become the scapegoat of choice for religious extremists, political opportunists, and talk-radio loudmouths.

It's offensive that each weekday afternoon, while you're working your heart out to make our public schools a success, demagogues with a radio audience of millions are peddling the message that teachers can't teach, students can't learn, and America is on the fast track to ruin.

Never mind the good news about public education. To take just one example, *Money* magazine (Oct. 1994) conducted an in-depth survey of American schools and gave this advice to its readers: "Forget the myth that private schools are the best. Our survey shows many public schools are every bit as good—if not better."

Chances are, you missed this *Money* report—for the same reason you so rarely see stories about other positive things happening in our schools. Good news is no news. For newspaper editors and TV news directors, what sells is sensationalism: gory crashes, lurid crimes, shootings in schools, and horror stories about government incompetence.

Regrettably, there are enough examples of failing public schools to feed the media's craving for the negative. It's little use to point out that these dysfunctional schools are the exception—or that they typically reflect the dysfunctional communities in which they operate.

The fact is that these schools shame us all. And they provide fodder to the demagogues who seek to tear down all of public education—the good and excellent along with the bad.

The battle is joined. And, let's be frank, we in public education must do a better job of fighting back. NEA is lobbying and speaking out at the national level. Our affiliates do a tremendous job of rallying opposition to anti-public education initiatives at the state and local levels. But we have not yet tapped the talents of public education's most effective and credible advocate: you.

NEA President
Keith Geiger

No spokesperson at the national or state level can match the trust and respect you have earned in your community. To prevail, we need to mobilize every one of NEA's 2.2 million members as aggressive, grassroots advocates for the cause of public education.

Far too many Americans have come to take public education for granted. We can't let this situation continue. We need to help our neighbors understand that public schools stand right at the heart of our democracy, and, to help us all get this message across, this month's *NEA Today* includes a special insert entitled "Why *Public* Schools?"

This pamphlet explains in clear, plain language the vital role public education plays within our democracy. Only the public schools educate all who come through their doors, instilling in young Americans a common sense of values, purpose, and destiny.

We face very real, very determined adversaries. They deal in half-truths and simplistic solutions, but their anti-government, anti-public education message has a powerful appeal to anxious Americans. In their generalized anger, many Americans want to cut taxes and dismantle government. And, with public schools accounting for a third or more of state and local budgets, we become the target.

Let's not misjudge the intentions of our more extreme opponents. These people are not in the business of offering constructive criticism. They do not seek to join us in the great movement to reform and improve American public education. Instead, they are quite explicit about wanting to dismember public education and replace it with private alternatives.

"Perhaps [America is] changing into a plutocracy," says Professor David Berliner of Arizona State University, "where a wealthy elite chooses not to use the public schools, and participates in undermining confidence in that system so as to promote the conception of schooling as a commodity, to be bought like medicine, to be regarded as a privilege rather than a right of every American."

We are in the fight of our lives. At stake is the very existence of our shared system of public education. I urge each of you to speak up and make a difference. This is one fight America cannot afford to lose.

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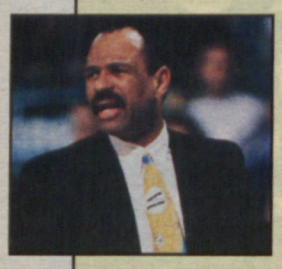
When teachers in New Albany, Indiana won control of their district's $30 million instructional fund, they cut high school class size and gave elementary teachers like Yvonne Grundy (left) a prep period during the student day.

7 Not Angry Anymore

What made basketball legend John Lucas so successful on the court and so self-destructive off it? What led to his recovery? What compels him to help others battling addiction? Meet the famous 76ers coach—he'll tell you himself.



13 Up in Smoke

Three million American teens smoke. Despite all the effort poured into education and research, there's been no drop in the rate of teen smoking in the last 10 years. Today's kids seem to think smoking is cool, quitting is easy, and life is forever.

55 Should Schools Offer All-Girl Math Classes?

Yes, says a California math teacher: All-girl classes boost girls' achievement, career options, and self-esteem. No way, an Illinois math teacher asserts: "Single-sex classes actually take opportunities away from girls."

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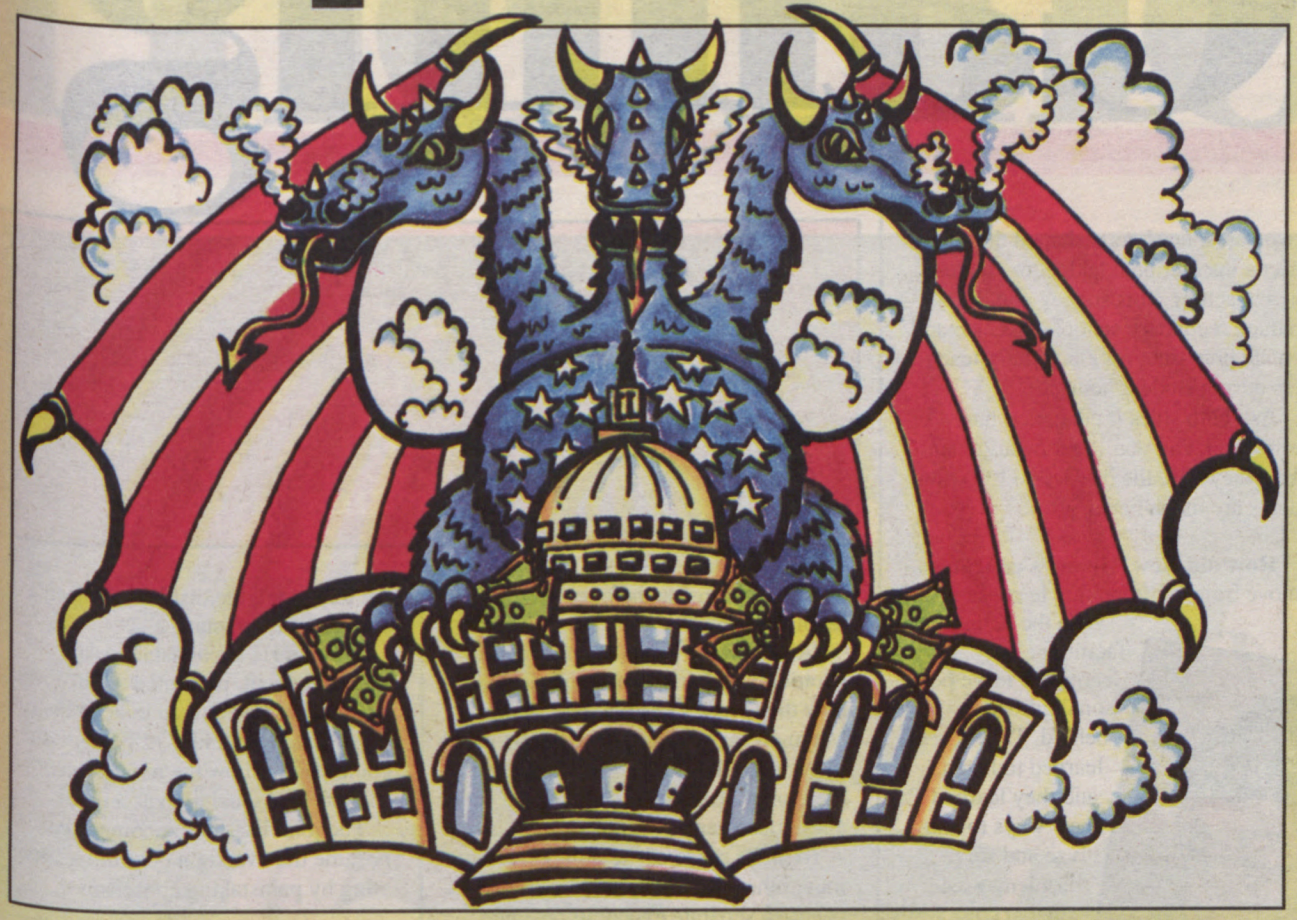
NATIONAL NEWS

Triple Threat



Cutbacks in aid to education. Vouchers for parents who send their kids to private schools. Restrictions on school employee bargaining rights. Welcome to the nightmare agenda newly elected governors and state lawmakers are now promoting in dozens of states.

It's hard to remember a time when so many state legislatures and governor's mansions were controlled by anti-public education politicians. Harder still to remember when public education advocates faced so many fights on so many different fronts.

NEA state affiliates are braced for a triple threat this winter:

➤ *Threat #1: Public money will go to private schools and private companies.* According to a post-election survey, four out of every five NEA state affiliates say their state legislature is likely to debate voucher legislation this year.

And two out of every five state affiliates anticipate a significant increase in the number of attempts to hire for-profit companies to manage public schools.

"We have to fight vouchers and privatization," says Bev Cuthbertson, a retired Arizona teacher and secretary of the NEA Republican Caucus. "There are a lot of NEA members who are Republicans, but people have to know that we're not in sync with everything Republican leaders have put on the table. And they should know we'll fight for what we believe in."

➤ *Threat #2: Governors and state legislators will attack school employee bargaining rights.* When anti-public education politicians won control of both houses, Michigan Governor John Engler seized the opportunity to ram through legislation undermining the bargaining and free speech rights of public school employees.

Association leaders predict that what happened in Michigan could be repeated in other states.

Ellen Banner

"I'm a strong Republican, but I'm not in sync with vouchers," says Bev Cuthbertson, a retired Arizona teacher who's secretary of the NEA Republican Caucus. "I believe in the separation of church and state, in taking care of public schools first, and in fighting vouchers."

"The benefits we've worked so hard to get—bargaining, health care, pensions, even respect—are at stake," notes NEA President Keith Geiger.

➤ *Threat #3: Public education funding will be squeezed by tax cuts and other new priorities.* On the national level, the newly elected Republican leaders of the House and Senate are actively promoting a Constitutional amendment to balance the federal budget—at the same time they're pushing across-the-board tax cuts and an *increase* in military spending.

Such a package, if enacted, would put at risk all the federal programs that aid schools and help children.

Many governors—from both parties—also fear that any tax-cutting, defense-boosting strategy at the federal level would only end up passing a crushing fiscal burden to already hard-pressed state governments.

For NEA Government Relations staffer Mary Elizabeth Teasley, the triple threat boils down to one question: "Will public schools survive to serve all the children?"

The answer, she adds, "depends, in large part, on us. Whether we're lobbying Republicans or Democrats at the local, state, or national level, 2.2 million Association members have to be strong advocates for public education."

HEROES & ZEROES

Our hero. Accepting a distinguished Disney award last fall, former UCLA basketball coach John Wooden spouted these words of wisdom: "No written word, no spoken plea, can teach our youth what they should be. Nor all the books on all the shelves, It's what the teachers are themselves." His source: the *NEA Journal*, circa 1933. Editor's note: It's nice to be remembered.

A Robin Hoodwink Award to three Georgia entrepreneurs who plan to take money from the U.S. Treasury and give it to the wealthy. Their idea: allow rich homeowners in Gwinnett County to roll the cost of private school tuition (only to the school they plan to open, of course) into their home mortgages, thereby making tuition payments tax deductible. Slick doesn't begin to describe this scheme. Perhaps unconstitutional does.

Tennessee sheriff Ron McClellan and his very handsome gift horse get this month's Robin Hood Award. It seems the sheriff stopped a speeding car (driven, coincidentally, by a suspected drug dealer) and found $897,000 in the trunk. Under federal drug-seizure laws, Campbell gets a share of the stash, which he plans to use to help fund drug education programs and purchase school supplies. Speeders beware.

A Ronald-Reagan-Here-We-Go-Again Award to the Heritage Foundation for trotting out an old idea for the new Congress. The ultraconservative think tank proposes, once again, shutting down the Department of Education. And, continuing their journey back in time, Heritage suggests repealing the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act. Let's hope no one's buying tickets for this trip.

The Thin-Ice-Is-No-Metaphor Award to NEA-Alaska member Michael Warme. While walking along the (partially) frozen Johnson River, Warme heard a seven-year-old girl scream as she fell through the ice 25 yards from shore. Careful not to fall in himself, he raced to the scene, spread out on the ice to distribute his weight, and pulled her out. She's fine, thank goodnice.

FROM CONFRONTATION. . .

Calling

Teachers in New Albany, Indiana bargained for—and won—control of their school district's instructional budget. What they've done with it is, well, instructional.

Get this: Teachers in New Albany, Indiana control 72 percent of their school district's $43.4 million budget. They set their own salaries, make key curricular decisions, and determine their own working conditions. The local Association and the administration work hand-in-hand to set policy and solve dozens of problems each year by consensus.

Who would have predicted such groundbreaking change from a school district known for its traditional—usually adversarial—approach to school management and labor relations?

Used to be, "we said the administration was terrible, the administration said we were terrible, and the public believed both of us," says Roz Fishman, a social studies teacher and president of the 672-member New Albany/Floyd County Education Association.

"In 1983-84, it was very nasty," Fishman recalls. "Unfair labor practice charges were filed and press conferences called for the sole purpose of personal attack. We came this close to striking," she says, holding her thumb and forefinger a quarter inch apart.

"Tensions increased over the years. In 1990-91 more than 50 teachers were laid off and a host of programs were cut. That's when both sides decided something had to give."

Today, there is both peace and revolution in Floyd County's schools. Example: In the last two years, teachers reshaped the district's instructional budget to create 60 new teaching slots so they could reduce secondary school class size and create prep time for elementary teachers during student hours.

Ask both sides if education has improved, and you'll get no argument. Yes, they nod, the district's 11,000 students are much better off.

How did New Albany's educators move from confrontation to consensus?

With the help of a facilitator, they learned to leave personal grudges behind. They learned to listen, and they learned new ways to analyze and solve problems (see sidebar).

But the turning point came when "the administration agreed to open the books if we agreed to let them bring the cash balance [contingency fund] up to 5 percent of the general fund," explains math teacher and bargaining team member Paul Maymon. "We agreed, because that cushion protects us from layoffs."

"Now we know where every penny is and how it's spent," says New Albany/Floyd County Education Association President Roz Fishman.

What was inside the once secret "little black book"?

"Actually, we found that this administration was fairly conscientious in how they were spending their money," Maymon says. "I never used to believe them when they said they didn't have the money. Turns out, it was just a cat-and-mouse game."

To make sense of the numbers, Maymon, other teachers, and administrators began to separate expenditures into two categories—all the expenses directly related to the classroom, including salaries of teachers and aides, and everything else.

By examining past financial records, they found that every time instructional expenditures exceeded 72 percent of the total pool, the district had been forced to lay off staff.

Herman Healy, assistant to the superintendent, presented the historic deal: if teachers agreed to keep instructional spending under 72 percent, they could control how the money was spent. The Association accepted.

The joint bargaining committee became the oversight committee, operating by painstaking consensus.

New power led to new thinking.

For years, Association proposals to reduce class size and give elementary teachers prep time during the school day dropped off the bargaining table at 3 a.m., when settlements on salaries and benefits loomed. Not this time.

Wave of the Future?

David Spencer, associate professor of labor studies at Indiana University, was hired to facilitate the first round of consensus bargaining in New Albany. He recently spoke with NEA Today assistant editor Stefanie Weiss.

Q Is Association control of instructional funds a logical outcome of consensus bargaining?

A When the school district said to the Association, "You take 71 percent of the budget and do anything you want with it," I just about had apoplexy. I never imagined that teachers would get to that point. It's a big risk on both parts—a wonderful goal, but a huge responsibility.

Q Is New Albany a model for the nation?

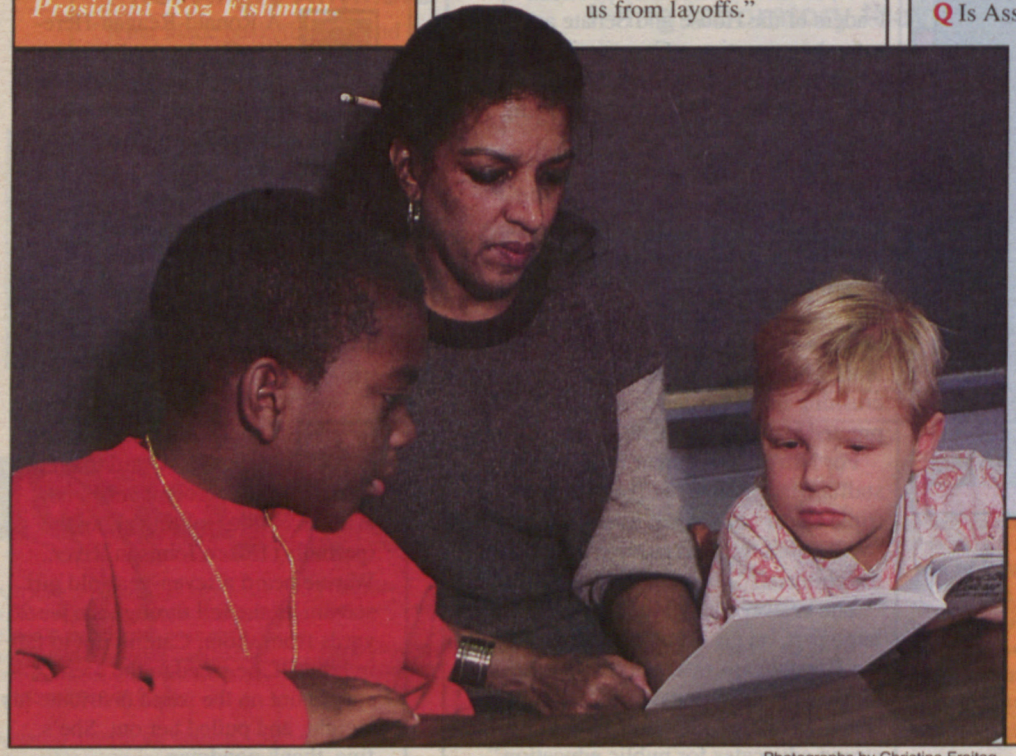
A I think so. Others can learn from what happened here, and what happened here can happen elsewhere if all the parties involved have a commitment to change.

Q What are the keys to making consensus bargaining work?

A Willingness to take risk, then training, training, and more training. Just because someone is an educator doesn't mean they know how to listen. They have to learn. Leadership on both sides is crucial, but I think the commitment has to start with the superintendent. If that's not there, then nothing will happen.

Q What's the downside to taking this kind of risk?

A Failure. If consensus bargaining fails, the two sides will go back to blood and guts again—only this time with a vengeance. It'll be a crusade where each side is out to destroy the other.



Third grade teacher Yvonne Grundy says her students are learning more "because they've decided what to study, not me."

Photographs by Christina Freitag

. . .TO CONSENSUS

The Shots

Reduced class size allows German teacher Sue Huff to talk with small groups of students.

Jim Tower gets at the nuts and bolts in his job as auto technology teacher—and grievance chair. "Now we try to solve problems instead of butt heads."

With newfound control over resources—and no one to blame but themselves—teachers began to reduce secondary teachers' load from six large classes to five smaller ones. German teacher Sue Huff was one of the first to benefit.

"A few years ago, I had 180 students in six classes, 36 students in one class alone," Huff says. "Just to make sure 36 kids know prepositions left no time for anything else."

Now Huff has five classes with a total of 125 students. "The kids each get to speak each day. We do skits. I'm doing audio portfolios—I could never do that before."

At the same time, Association leaders created an elementary physical education program and beefed up elementary art and music classes. While students are engaged, elementary teachers—for the first time ever—have time to think during student hours.

"Having the time has added a dimension to my teaching," says third grade teacher Yvonne Grundy. "It allows me to make adjustments to my day-to-day plans, to go forward or back depending on how my students are doing."

And it's changed her approach to teaching. "Now I give my students opportunities to decide what they're going to be learning," Grundy says.

"This thing is far from perfect," says math teacher Paul Maymon, "but the positives far outweigh the negatives. There's no comparison."

On the plus side, the new order has:

➤ *Transformed bargaining sessions into problem-solving ones.* Under the new system, any teacher can put an issue on the table by filling out two forms—one that states the problem and one that lays out a proposed solution, along with its positive and negative effects.

Last year, more than 50 issues were brought to the table. All were resolved by consensus, but only four resulted in any changes in contract language.

➤ *Created a stronger local Association.* To determine district spending priorities and maximize member input, local leaders created a ratio of one building rep for every 10 teachers. Each month, the building reps meet at a local representative assembly to discuss key issues.

➤ *Improved public support for the school district.* "Before, when we badmouthed each other in the paper, it didn't look like were fighting for the students," explains music teacher Ruth Bailey. "Now word gets around about the good things happening at school."

➤ *Paved the way for educational innovation.* Teachers at Fairmont Elementary are proud of their pilot program to offer band, chorus, and orchestra to all students—not just those who already own instruments.

Teachers and administrators are now talking about creating middle schools, offering foreign language instruction in the elementary grades, and including special needs students in regular classes.

On the down side, it's been difficult to define consensus or determine how much input is realistic. When decisions are made, there's still a teacher who says, "*I* didn't agree to that."

Some teachers feel uncomfortable with decisions such as setting salaries for instructional aides (they're not represented by the Association or any other union) or charging students for driver education.

"Before, we could blame the administrators," explains speech therapist and Association Vice-President Janey Dablow. "Eventually, we might have to be the bad guys."

Everyone complains about how much time consensus decision making takes. "I feel like I'm in bargaining year-round," says local President Roz Fishman.

And, finally, some miss the confrontational good ol' days.

"I was good at picket lines and sit-ins," jokes government teacher Ruth Becht. "Yeah," agrees Fishman, wistfully. "It's hard to be nice all the time."

—*Stefanie Weiss*

Want to know more? You can "chat" with NAFCEA President Roz Fishman via NEA Online. Send e-mail to NAFCEA1@aol.com. To read key sections of the NAFCEA contract for yourself, go to the "Must Reads" library of the Local Leaders Update and Exchange. Keyword: "NEA Local." For more information on NEA Online, see page 52.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Keeping the Language Alive

Teach the kids when they're young. That's how a handful of schools plan to keep the Hawaiian language from dying out.

Hawaii is the only one of the 50 states that has two official languages—English and Hawaiian. And nine Hawaiian schools, mostly elementary, are the only places where students can study Hawaiian language and culture all day, every day.

In those schools, which follow the "immersion" model, students speak and write only Hawaiian all day long—during the school day, at lunch, even on the playground.

The day begins when students arrive on school grounds. To enter the school, they must chant the school song in Hawaiian. Hawaiian teachers chant back to them, and then students go to class.

At Waiau Elementary School in Pearl City, Oahu, for example, sixth grade teacher Keith Akama explains the traditional greeting newcomers receive.

"If you were to visit our school," he notes, "we would chant, 'You are a precious blossom on an ever-flowering tree.' After that, we would welcome you and feed you."

While teachers follow the state curriculum for all subjects, they substitute studying Hawaiian topics or subjects for other ones when they can. When it comes to plant biology, for example, they study Hawaiian plants.

"When we study Greek mythology, we compare it to Hawaiian mythology," explains Akama. "We do the same for every subject."

Classroom materials in native Hawaiian are nearly impossible to come by.

"I have to translate all classroom texts and workbooks into Hawaiian," says Keline Kanahele, a kindergarten and first grade teacher at Kapaa Elementary School on the island of Kauai. "And I make all my classroom materials myself."

"This may be the only immersion program in a native language in the United States," speculates Puanani Wilhelm, a specialist in language immersion at the Hawaii state department of education.

Ray Tanaka/Photoplant

A shortage of good resources forces Kauai kindergarten/first grade teacher Keline Kanahele to make her own classroom materials, so her students can learn the native Hawaiian language.

Now in its tenth year, the program receives $900,000 in state funding to cover staff costs at nine schools—usually "schools within schools"—throughout the Hawaiian islands.

The state funds one elementary school per island, with the exception of Oahu, which has three. Two schools have programs through eighth grade. Over the next few years, these schools will add a grade each year until, eventually, students can stay in the program until graduation.

The program's fixed budget doesn't include adding a grade a year. So parents involved in the immersion program help by raising money and lobbying the state legislature for increased funding.

Many parents are learning the language alongside their kids by taking evening classes, though attendance varies with each location.

"Very few—in fact, almost none—of our children speak Hawaiian at home with their parents," Akama notes. "This is our biggest problem."

But Puanani Wilhelm says the parental involvement cup is half full, not half empty. "We have the highest rate of parental involvement of any department of education program."

Now that the programs are well established at nine schools, some staff have larger dreams. "My dream," says Wilhelm, "is to have a separate K-12 boarding school. Teachers, students, and staff—cafeteria workers and custodians—would all speak Hawaiian together."

—Melissa Etlin
NEA Human and Civil Rights

For more information, contact Puanani Wilhelm, education specialist in the Hawaiian language immersion program, Department of Education, 189 Lunalilo Home Rd., 2nd floor, Honolulu, HI 96825, 808/396-2545.

WASHINGTON WATCH

Person To Watch

A former teacher, guidance counselor, and principal, **Rep. William Goodling** (R-PA) has a wealth of education experience—which he'll need as the new chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, now known as the House Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee.

Dire Straits Ahead

The promised post-election assault on federal education programs and funding has begun. The new Congressional leadership has gone on record in favor of drastic cuts in spending and the elimination of some programs. The Vocational Education Act and the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act are both up for reauthorization. You can bet the door's also open to vouchers, tax credits, and privatization efforts.

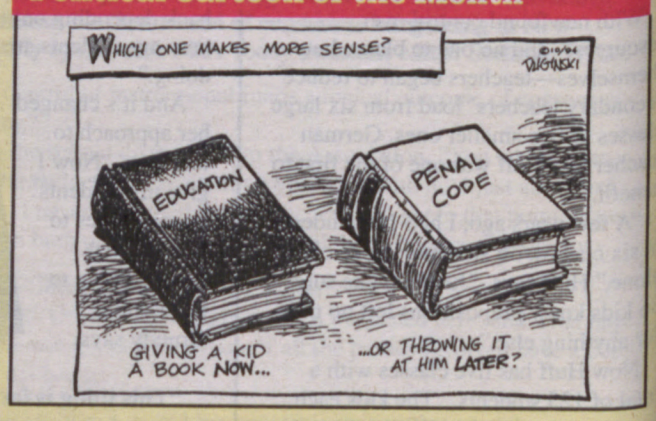
One Shining Light

Federal support for education technology may have a promising future in the 104th Congress. In the wings: NEA-backed legislative proposals to link America's public schools to the world-wide Internet and the Information Highway.

What You Can Do

Don't let the naysayers eliminate programs that help your students. Stand up for equity and adequate funding of education. Write to your representative and Senators and tell them that public education is a fundamental right you expect them to protect.

Political Cartoon of the Month



Congressional Quote of the Month

"Education should not be a partisan issue; it should be a national imperative."
—Sen. James Jeffords (R-Vermont)

Meet:

John Lucas

Not Angry Anymore

"I've danced with the devil," says basketball legend John Lucas. "Not a lot of us who've done that get to come back."

Lucas is one of the lucky ones. After years of fighting drug and alcohol addiction, John Lucas is back as head coach, general manager, and vice- president of basketball operations for the Philadelphia 76ers.

He's come back—and he's given back. In 1986, Lucus developed a fitness program for addicts in recovery. In 1991, he purchased the Miami Tropics to provide a supportive basketball environment for recovering players and coaches. This year, Lucas wrote about his experiences in Winning a Day at a Time *($19.95 plus $3 s&h from Hazelden, Center City, Minn.).*

NEA Today *staff writer Diane Dismuke recently spoke with Lucas in New York City, just before a 76ers-Knicks game.*

You were the number one draft pick in professional basketball in 1976, but you say you weren't satisfied?
I was the number one pick in the draft, yet I was angry. Four years earlier, I had more than 1,000 college offers, but I thought even more colleges could have contacted me. I became an adult athlete, not an adult person.

I took all the competitive principles that I learned in competitive sports and applied them to my life—get the prettiest girl, get the best this, the best that—instead of being comfortable with who I was and what made John Lucas happy.

Only recently have I started wearing a watch. Before I went into recovery, I'd always get into a competition over whether my watch was the best. I'd spend a lot of useless time comparing my watch to other people's watches. That's part of the personality of an addictive person.

Do you think athletes are especially susceptible to drug use?
I think any person who's tried to become very successful and is in a competitive environment is especially susceptible to some type of addiction.

I love to compete and I love the idea of learning how to compete to win, how to win to compete. Those things are very, very important to me.

Such a competitive nature often leads to drug addiction and alcohol abuse because it attacks the ego: You tell me that I can't do something, I'm out to prove that I can. You get to a point where nothing is ever good enough.

Are professional athletes good role models for kids?
Kids should view athletes as one type of role model—and admire them for their athletic ability *only*.

As a child, I had multiple role models. My dad was my god. But I had a favorite basketball player and a favorite football player. Martin Luther King, Jr. and John F. Kennedy were two of my heroes, too. Kids should have role models that they see daily.

Should kids aspire to be professional athletes?
Each year 300,000 kids play basketball. About 1,000 of them get college scholarships. At the end of a four-year or maybe three-year period, 57 of them are drafted by the NBA. Of those, 27 make an NBA team. Their average life span in the league is three years.

We all should have the ambition to better ourselves as human beings, to build our character, to work on conditioning our bodies. But I tell kids don't let sports use you, you use sports instead. Take a college scholarship, go to school, do your best, get a degree. You may not be able to play in the NBA, but you may work in the sports industry.

Above all, don't let the game consume your love of the game. Let the game be a part of you, and you consume the benefits of the love of the game.

What role should a high school coach play in kids' lives?
I know the ultimate goal of a coach is to win games—without winning, there's no job. But if someone is involved in the lives of 12 or 15 boys every day for six months, that person becomes like a parent.

It's a mentoring role. A coach has got to know when to love the kids, when to scold them, and when to give them guidance.

Sports coaches are often role models. I coach professional basketball and I played for 15 years, yet when I try to tell my son something, he'll say, "Let my coach tell me. He'll know.

My role as coach of the 76ers is to better my players. I would love to win a championship, but that's not my ultimate goal. My ultimate goal is to build quality young men, to see families and relationships established, to give them the skills to take care of their finances and to move on in their lives.

You have a master's degree in education and come from a family of educators. In fact, you have an NEA connection.
My father was a high school principal and my mom was a junior high school teacher in Durham, North Carolina.

My dad was a member of the NEA Board of Directors—is still an honorary member of the Board—and many of our family vacations were centered around attending NEA conventions. I still have pins and pennants from all those I attended. I was an NEA baby.

Your book *Luke's Way* is a version of *Winning a Day at a Time* for preteens and teens. Why did you write it?
Luke's Way (Hazelden, $4.95) is for kids who think they have the world by the tail—the valedictorians, the kids who say, "That could never happen to me." It could happen to anyone.

See, I never had a drug problem. Drugs were the *solution* to my problems. What I had was a living problem. Some part of my life was unacceptable to me.

And for kids, some parts of their daily lives are unacceptable to them. So they turn to drugs, food, sex, whatever to make them feel whole.

What's in your future?
Coaching has been a great gift; it gives me the chance to work with 12 talented men. But life on the basketball court isn't me, it's a part of me. What I am is a grateful and blessed recovered addict and alcoholic.

I'd like to help people help themselves. Nothing makes me feel better than to see someone get his or her life back together. For me, that's like winning the NBA crown.

Grassroots

State

MICHIGAN

A judge has blocked implementation of Michigan's charter school law, saying it would in effect send public funds to private schools. The Michigan Education Association last fall backed a legal challenge to the poorly constructed law, which granted charters to noneducators and prevented the state board of education from having any oversight over charter schools.

Charter school backers—including Governor John Engler—have appealed the decision and are busy crafting a new law.

FLORIDA

Education Alternatives, Inc. has failed to make the grade. A recent study found Florida students at South Pointe Elementary School in Miami Beach, the nation's first privatized public school, were equaled or outperformed by students at comparable public schools. And public schools achieved those results with less taxpayer money than EAI needed. The Dade superintendent now acknowledges that EAI representatives "oversold themselves."

UTAH

The Utah Education Association Foundation for Children at Risk is offering grants to teachers who want training for inclusion. The money—10 grants of $500 each—comes from donations totaling some $50,000 from an anonymous benefactor.

OREGON

School employees were dealt a blow last November when voters narrowly passed a measure that calls for public employees to make an additional 6 percent contribution to their pension. Measure 8 also prevents employers from giving a salary raise to offset the payment (unless prohibited by collective bargaining agreements in effect by January 1), and prohibits factoring unused sick leave into the retirement benefits calculation.

PUERTO RICO

Vouchers have risen like the phoenix from the ashes of various defeats, but this time they may have been quashed for good. The Puerto Rico Supreme Court has now ruled that vouchers do indeed violate the commonwealth's Constitution.

IN OHIO

Locals Orchestrate Greater Options

How many polymer science students does it take to make a high school class in Canton?

Just a handful. But it took the collaboration of four school districts and four Associations in Ohio's Stark County to make esoteric classes like this one a reality.

That's because the students come not only from Canton, but from other schools throughout the county.

Thanks to the Comprehensive Collaborative Program—an agreement reached two years ago between the Canton Local, North Canton City, Lake, and Plain Education Associations and the school districts they cover—district boundaries have been dissolved to create wider opportunities for students.

What's more, a district won't lose money and a teacher's job won't be in jeopardy if a student pursues a special course in another district.

This year, the Canton City and Jackson Associations have joined the program.

With the districts now pooling their resources, students can select from a course list that includes Japanese, dance, Latin, engineering, and marine biology.

"This was our answer to vouchers," explains Plain Education Association President John Davies. "Rather than competing against one another for jobs, resources, and students, we felt collaboration was the key."

The collaboration has made for not only more innovative classes, but also a better contract for the teachers. Under the agreement, jobs will be saved by combining enrollment. And if a position is reduced, a teacher would have broad rights across district lines.

String players from five different school districts, keeping a watchful eye on the baton of Lake Education Association member Madalyn Landers (inset), are making music thanks to Stark County's Comprehensive Collaborative Program.

Association leaders are also part of the decision-making process, with Association representatives from each district as well as district superintendents serving on the Oversight Committee.

"At a time when Ohio is very strapped for money, this is a good way to pool our resources and our skills for the sake of our children," says Chuck Riegler, North Canton's representative and one of the original negotiators. "It also says to parents that when you put your faith in public education, wonderful things can happen."

IN NEW JERSEY

NJEA Promotes Truth in Advertising

Voters who listen to the radio, glance at billboards, or even just watch TV are getting to know the many accomplishments of public schools in New Jersey.

Television ads touting Association members' achievements in the classroom and a weekly cable TV program featuring successful, innovative public school programs are just a part of a two-year, $10 million Pride in Public Education campaign recently launched by the New Jersey Education Association.

"It's time our citizens received a true picture of public education in New Jersey," says NJEA President Dennis Testa. "It's time to show them the facts and let them see for themselves that our public schools are good and getting better."

Statewide radio, print, and billboard advertising will be coordinated with the TV campaign. Community outreach programs begun by NJEA affiliates will be highlighted. And a quarterly newsletter featuring successful partnerships between business and higher education will be sent to education, government, and corporate leaders.

NJEA's goals: everything from increasing local school budgets to getting more pro-education school board candidates elected to reducing strife in collective bargaining.

IN TEXAS

Local's Software Uncovers Millions

The Lewisville Education Association struck it rich recently when it uncovered a $17 million surplus in the budget of its suburban Dallas school district.

Its divining rod: budget analysis software adapted for Texas budget categories by UniServ Director Judy Olstein.

It took LEA six months to get all the figures from the administration, and the results were staggering.

"We found the district had been running a surplus equal to more than 20 percent of budget for years," says LEA President Raylene Duke. "This year it was projected to be 34 percent."

District officials contended they were saving for a rainy day. At the school board meeting where Duke presented the Association's findings—held on a rainy night last spring—she held up her umbrella and said, "It's a rainy day." The school board drew the appropriate conclusion, and gave the teachers a 6 percent salary increase.

Debbie Mahondro

LEA President Raylene Duke

TAXING LIMITS

Funding Survives Most '94 Elections

Key sources for education funding survived judgment at the voting booth in most states last November.

In Missouri, Amendment 7—otherwise known as Hancock II—would have required voter approval of any increases in taxes, licenses, or fees. Despite a $2 million campaign promoting the amendment, it was rejected by 68 percent of the voters.

In Montana and Oregon, voters said no to amendments requiring voter approval of tax increases.

In Florida, voters passed an amendment that ties increases in state revenue collection to personal income growth. But vital sources of education revenue, including property taxes and lottery revenues, are exempt.

In Nevada, voters approved an initiative requiring tax increases to be approved by two-thirds of the legislature. But the initiative must be approved by voters a second time, and the Nevada State Education Association is bracing for that battle.

In South Dakota, voters rejected a property tax cap—just barely—by only 2,000 votes.

TEACHER SALARIES

Making a Living, State by State

In 1993-94, a year that saw public school enrollment grow by 1.5 percent to 43 million students, the average public school teacher salary rose by 2 percent, to $35,723.

As in the previous year, Connecticut, Alaska, and New York led the salary pack. In fact, the same states ranked in the top 10 for the past two years, with slight shifts in position.

These figures reflect the smallest percentage increase in 25 years. Tight state and local budgets, low inflation, and loss of higher paid teachers to early retirement options all contributed to the relatively small growth in salaries.

The salaries for 1993-94 reflect an overall 12.1 percent increase over teacher salaries from 10 years ago, in constant dollars.

Of the nation's 2,505,004 elementary and secondary public school teachers in that year, 73.1 percent were women.

AVERAGE SALARIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS, 1993-1994

Connecticut	$49,910	Colorado	$33,826
Alaska	46,581	Virginia	33,063
New York	45,772	Florida	31,944
New Jersey	44,693	Arizona	31,800
Dist. of Col.	42,543	Kentucky	31,640
Michigan	42,500	Maine	30,996
Pennsylvania	42,411	Wyoming	30,952
Massachusetts	40,852	Iowa	30,760
California	40,289	West Virginia	30,549
Maryland	39,463	Georgia	30,527
Illinois	39,387	Texas	30,519
Rhode Island	39,261	Tennessee	30,514
Oregon	37,590	Missouri	30,324
Delaware	37,469	North Carolina	29,727
Hawaii	36,564	South Carolina	29,566
Minnesota	36,146	Nebraska	29,564
Wisconsin	35,990	Alabama	28,705
Washington	35,855	Montana	28,200
		Utah	28,056
UNITED STATES	35,723	New Mexico	27,922
		Arkansas	27,873
Indiana	35,711	Idaho	27,756
Ohio	35,684	Oklahoma	27,009
Vermont	34,517	Louisiana	26,285
New Hampshire	34,121	North Dakota	25,506
Nevada	33,955	Mississippi	25,153
Kansas	33,919	South Dakota	25,059

Source: NEA Research, *Ranking of the States, 1994; Estimates of School Statistics* data bank

Local

CONNECTICUT

The West Hartford Education Association has proposed to the school board an early childhood magnet school—the Jump Start School—that would feature consensus decision making instead of a school principal, a school council made up of school stakeholders who would set general policy, and a homework center featuring the latest telecomunications technology.

Says WHEA President Alan Francis, looking to stem the privatization tide that hit neighboring Hartford: "We have to be proactive, show initiative, and lead."

ARKANSAS

Members of the Pulaski Association of Support Staff have emerged from a contentious two-year organizing drive with a master contract that guarantees them pay and leave improvements, union rights, and a for-credit professional growth program. The administration resisted the Association at every turn, and even secretly taped phone calls to PASS members. "But we joined together for this contract," notes President Sandy Hawkins, "and now we'll be treated equitably."

MARYLAND

For years, the Carroll County Education Association stood alone in citing the need to improve discipline. "We wanted the board to know that even in this quiet, conservative county, schools are having problems," recalls CCEA President Cynthia Cummings.

The community finally listened, and now CCEA is taking the lead on a countywide discipline committee. Teachers and support staff, along with administrators, parents, and students, serve as the brain trust for mapping out strategies and creating school-based programs that include distributing booklets with innovative ideas.

IDAHO

Idaho's largest local affiliate, the 1,400-member Boise Education Association, reached a one-year agreement with the district at the eleventh hour and averted a strike. In addition to a 3.5 percent base salary increase, issues such as voluntary transfers, classroom aide assignments, and health and safety matters will now be brought to the bargaining table.

COVER STORY

FROM DISPUTE TO

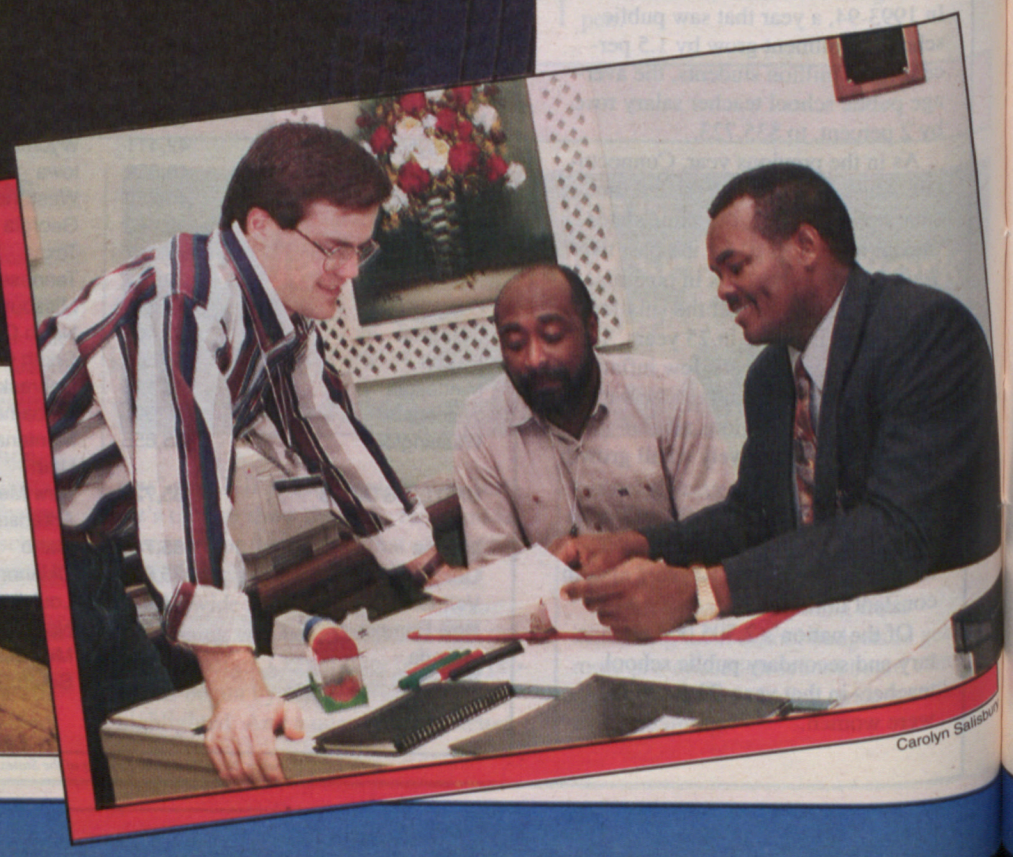
Against the backdrop of high-tech school security measures, DuVal High School has chosen a low-tech route. DuVal uses mediators, not metal detectors.

It's lunchtime at DuVal High School in Lanham, Maryland, and the winter air is chilly. But inside a small office, students LaTasha Sweezy and Leslie McGruder are working up a sweat. Their task? Keeping a group of students cool in the midst of another heated argument.

Each student involved in the dispute gets time to make his or her point, and gradually Sweezy and McGruder get to the root causes of the disagreement.

This time, it's disrespect stemming from insults and rumors. Quite often, it's an offhand remark, an old conflict resulting from neighborhood rivalries, or an argument over a boyfriend or girlfriend.

This is no ordinary meeting. It's a mediation, and Sweezy and McGruder are specially trained in conflict resolu-



Carolyn Salisbury

A little mediation goes a long way. That's the view of DuVal Spanish teacher Kim Hunt (left), math teacher and mediator Lawrence Buck (middle), and mediation specialist Edward Maxwell (right).

COVER STORY

DIALOGUE

tion. Throughout the two-hour session, the two mediators reinforce the rules: listen carefully to what the other person is saying, restate the problem in your own words, don't interrupt, agree to solve the problem.

By the time the mediation is over, both sides are talked out. Their differences resolved, they agree not to fight and to use mediation if the problem comes up again.

Like hundreds of other high schools with 1,000-plus students, DuVal High has its share of disputes. But since the school's mediation program began five years ago, suspensions for fighting have dropped dramatically and the school climate has changed.

"In the past, disputes grew like storm clouds until, finally, all you could do was run for cover," recalls Edward Maxwell, a DuVal teacher who became the school's full-time mediation specialist four years ago.

"Now, teachers, administrators, and support staff are trained to watch for the signs and head a situation off before it gets too bad. Even the students take part in the process, letting us know if another storm is coming.

"Deep down inside, no student ever wants to be violent," Maxwell says. "A conflict resolution program gives disputants the skills to avoid violence. With that in place, a student can learn in peace."

Educators, parents, even students want programs like DuVal's to work. The alternative? More violence—and statistics that will make today's numbers pale by comparison.

Right now, every hour brings 2,000 more students attacked on school grounds, 900 more teachers threatened, 40 more assaulted.

Every day 100,000 kids bring guns to school; every day, 40 children are killed or injured by them.

According to the recent Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 44 percent of public school students report personal experiences with angry scenes or confrontations. One quarter say they've been in fights.

"With statistics like these, we've got to find methods that work," says Annette Townley, executive director of the National Association for Mediation in Education.

"Keeping weapons out—as desirable as that is—doesn't necessarily keep violence out," she asserts. "But conflict resolution does."

DuVal is one of some 5,000 public and private schools across the United States that now use peer mediation programs. Halfway into this school year, DuVal's 40 peer mediators had settled 150 disputes, including one that involved 13 students and took a full day to resolve.

"More than half of these incidents would have escalated into fights without the program," says Maxwell, who trains the mediators, coordinates the sessions, and holds weekly classes and debriefing sessions for the student mediators.

In addition to settling disputes, Maxwell—a Prince George's County Educators Association member—and the student mediators do a lot of teaching. Recently, they got an entire class to stop teasing a classmate by helping students come to grips with diversity and differences.

Plus, mediators travel to the elementary schools and middle schools that feed into DuVal to help them set up peer mediation programs of their own.

What makes DuVal's peer mediation program successful?

➤ *Carefully trained mediators.* At DuVal, "student mediators have to apply to the program, and once accepted, go through weeks of training," Maxwell explains.

"Then they move in stages, from observing a mediation, to co-mediating, and finally, to mediating themselves. That way, we know all our mediators have the same skills."

➤ *Outreach to students, school staff, parents.* Throughout the year, during assemblies, classroom sessions, and meetings, the mediation program is explained and highlighted for every stakeholder in the DuVal community. The students stage mock mediations for students and parents. Parents and staff are even encouraged to use the mediation process (see box).

➤ *Confidentiality and trust.* "When a mediation session is over, even our notes are destroyed," says student mediator LaTasha Sweezy. "That, plus our agreement that information about the mediation will never be revealed, boosts our classmates' confidence in the system. Once they believe in it, they'll use it."

➤ *Full support of staff and administrators.* "For the mediation program to work well, we have to have support of the school staff," Maxwell says. "That isn't always easy, but it's essential."

➤ *An emergency system capable of quick action.* As a full-time mediator, DuVal's Maxwell is able to step in immediately.

Battles may be won, but the war against school violence goes on.

"Just because you've put a mediation program in place doesn't mean you've solved the problem," notes mediation expert Annette Townley.

"Your school may require additional measures including metal detectors.

"And," she adds, "conflict resolution doesn't mean just peer mediation. Schools need to teach conflict resolution skills in the curriculum. It's all got to fit into a broader program if you want to maintain safer schools."

—Anita Merina

Carolyn Salisbury

To DuVal mediators like (left to right) Erica Boni-Awotwi, Tashara Jones, and Leslie McGruder, peace is the ultimate goal.

NOT FOR STUDENTS ONLY

At DuVal High School, the students aren't the only ones using mediation services. This fall, a dispute over grades and classroom behavior led Spanish teacher Kim Hunt and one of his students to the mediation room.

"This was a classic case of miscommunication between a teacher and a student," says mediation specialist Edward Maxwell. "The student understood a set of directions one way, and Mr. Hunt understood it another. Once they sat down and discussed the problem, they were able to clear the air and come to an understanding."

For Hunt, the mediator's perspective made the difference. "I could see my student's side, and he could see I wasn't down on him. The process bridged a gap we weren't able to cross on our own."

At DuVal, teachers, school staff, even parents have used mediation. "At one point, we had two students who had resolved their differences, but the parents were still angry," Maxwell recalls. "So I called them in and helped them through it. Even now, those involved still apply the skills they learned that day."

RESOURCES

➤ *Innovative Discipline* profiles six techniques—including peer mediation—to deal with school violence. NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Series, Stock No. 2904-6-00-F. $9.95 includes s&h. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516, 800/229-4200.

➤ The National Association for Mediation in Education (NAME) offers several publications. Contact NAME, 205 Hampshire House, Box 33635, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003-3635, 415/545-2462.

✔ *Annotated Bibliography for Teaching Conflict Resolution in the Schools,* Annie Cheatham, $7.

✔ *Setting Up a Program—General Packet,* $14.

✔ *Peer Mediation: Conflict Resolution in the School.* Fred Schrumpf, Donna Crawford and H. Chu Usadel. Program guide $30, student manual $11.50.

➤ Conflict resolution and mediation is also a topic in NEA's upcoming National Conference, "Safe Communities, Safe Schools," April 7-9, in Los Angeles, CA. For information, call 202/822-7118.

➤ And don't forget NEA Online, NEA's electronic online network. Talk to colleagues and download Association materials aimed at countering violence in schools. Keyword: NEA Teaching, then click the T&L Message Board and select the School Safety and Violence topic. For more information about NEA Online, see page 52.

TRENDS

Dust Settling

After more than 10 years, millions of dollars in legal fees, and tens of millions for removal and abatement, school districts are about to settle their claims with asbestos manufacturers to the tune of some $200 million.

The class-action lawsuit—filed on behalf of 30,000 school districts against 50 asbestos manufacturers—makes this one of the biggest and most complex cases ever addressed in the federal courts. All districts in the United States have a share in the money pot—except for those that decided six years not to go in on the litigation.

No one knows yet exactly how the money will be divided, but at least one asbestos manufacturer sees an opportunity to profit off the damage settlement. Why not, says the company, offer schools discount coupons to buy company products in lieu of cash awards.

Toying with Reality

This past holiday season wasn't so jolly for toy gun manufacturers. Toys 'R' Us, the nation's largest toy chain, pulled realistic toy guns from their shelves before Christmas. Kay-Bee toys soon followed suit, and the Wal-Mart chain was selling off its inventory without intending to restock.

This shocked toymakers like the Strombecker Corporation, which controls 60 percent of the toy gun market. Overall, the Toy Manufacturers of America says sales of realistic-looking guns hit an all-time high of $325 million in 1992. In 1993, however, toy gun sales dropped off to $246 million following a rash of violent acts committed by people carrying them.

Building Boom

School buildings are springing up all over the country. Education construction rose to $10.8 billion in 1993, a 12 percent increase over 1990. In the Southeast, $2.5 billion worth of school construction took place in 1993. The Rocky Mountain region spent the least on education construction in 1993: $309 million.

But this boom wasn't funded totally by bond issues. In fact, school bond issues for elementary and secondary schools have begun to drop after an all-time high of $39.8 billion spent in 1992. In 1993, bond issues totaled $28.9 billion.

Exercising Options

High school kids are exercising less, with almost equal numbers sweating over a game of Nintendo as a game of basketball.

Around 37 percent of high school students surveyed say they exercise vigorously and regularly, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study.

But 35 percent say they spend at least three hours a day watching TV or playing video games. The study, based on a survey of 11,631 high school students from 124 schools nationwide, did find that this percentage declined as students got older.

Boys were consistently more active than girls in all age categories. And girls became increasingly less active as they grew older—31 percent of ninth graders said they exercised three or more times a week, while only 17.3 percent of twelfth graders made the same claim.

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Health

Information about health factors that affect the way students learn

A former smoker, Michael Eriksen now directs the Office on Smoking and Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He recently spoke with NEA Today *staff writer Victoria Lytle.*

Has tobacco use been increasing or decreasing among school-age children in recent years?
Over the last 10 years, there has been virtually no change in teen smoking habits. If anything, teen tobacco use has increased slightly—this at a time when adult smoking has been declining and when there's been unprecedented attention paid to the hazards of smoking. We're making virtually no progress with teens—and we're very disturbed about that.

So teens aren't buying the message that smoking is an ugly habit?
It's perverse, but as smoking becomes less glamorous in the adult population, it's seen as more countercultural and more attractive among certain teen groups.

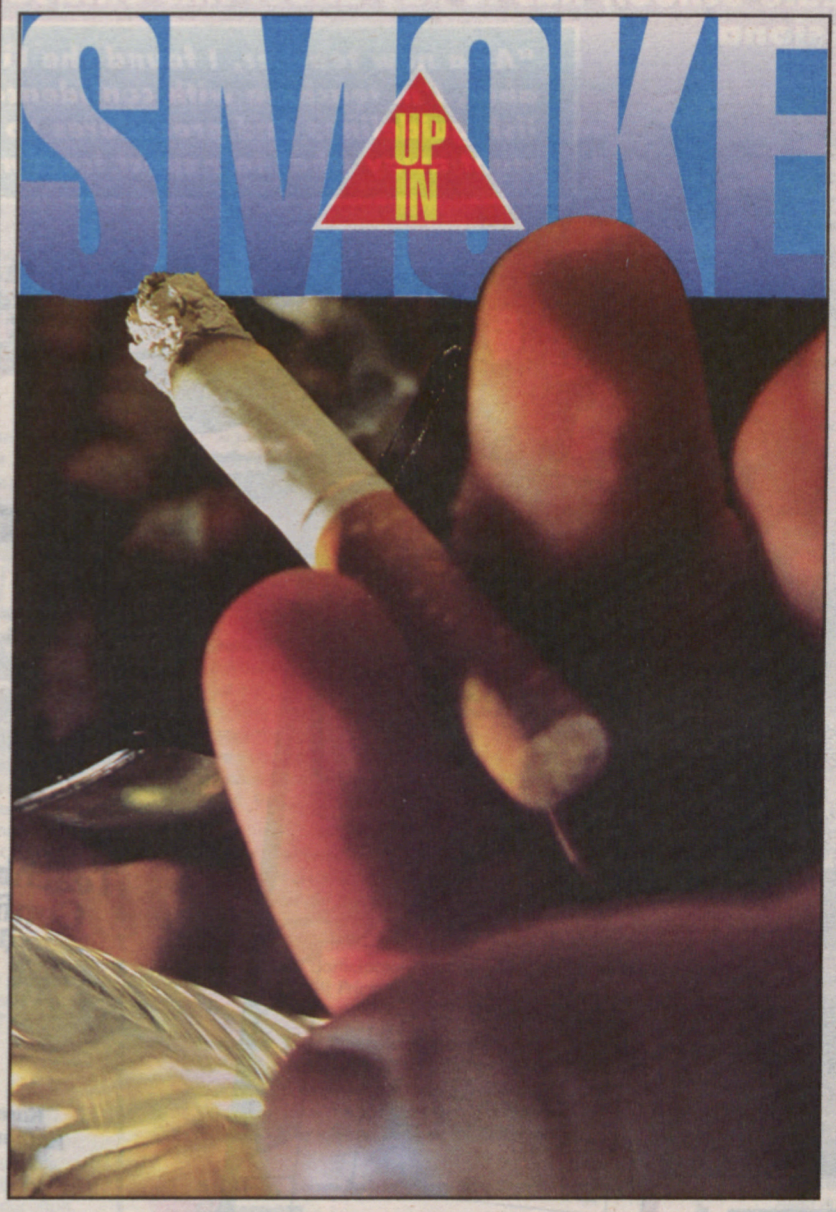
If you look at MTV or the movie *Reality Bites*, which features young college graduates, it's almost as if they worship the cigarette. Smoking is a huge part of their life. It's a crutch—embraced because it's looked down upon by adults.

What percentage of the school-age population smokes?
About 19 percent of high school seniors—in total, some 3 million young people—smoke every day. That's the same rate that we had in 1984. There had been a decline in the late '70s and early '80s, but we've plateaued. Now the rate has risen again.

How many people in this country are addicted to nicotine?
By our estimate, 48 million people—400,000 of whom die prematurely each year. The cost to society—in health care bills and years of life lost—is staggering.

More people die from smoking than from AIDS, motor vehicle accidents, alcohol abuse, and heroin use—combined. In fact, one out of every five deaths in America is smoking related.

Did most of today's smokers get started in their teens?
Absolutely. Almost all—about 90 percent—of smokers had their first cigarettes by the age of 18. The average smoker had his or her first cigarette at age 14 1/2. Nearly all smoking habits start during junior and senior high school.



Aren't teens concerned about cancer or heart disease or emphysema?
Not really. These messages seem irrelevant to most teens. Teens typically view themselves as immortal—they're not worried about long-term health effects. They think they can quit when they get older. The tragedy is that very little experimentation quickly results in addiction.

We have data now that show kids never expect their smoking habits to be longlasting. We asked kids whether they saw themselves smoking in five years, and most said no. When we surveyed them after five years, 75 percent of them were still smoking. They get trapped because nicotine is a very powerful addicting agent.

Is cigarette advertising effective in hooking kids?
Yes. In fact, kids appear to be more sensitive to advertising than adults. We just released data showing that kids are more likely than adults to smoke the brands of cigarettes most heavily advertised. Over 60 percent of kids smoke Marlboro, whereas only 25 percent of adults smoke Marlboro. The same goes for Camel and Newport, which are the most advertised brands.

Advertising isn't the only cause of teen smoking, but it's a factor—and, I think, an insidious one. Kids see advertising images all over the place, all the time. It's affecting their decisions in an almost subliminal way.

What are some of the risk factors for starting tobacco use?
Kids who are most at risk are the ones who are having the most difficult time succeeding at school. Dropouts are the highest users of cigarettes.

Research shows that kids who smoke are also likely to use alcohol, engage in unprotected sex, and be more prone to violence. So when you see a 10-, 11-, or 12-year-old kid smoking, that's a good indicator that the kid may be trying other dangerous things. He or she deserves some attention, both from parents and school officials.

What methods are most effective in combating tobacco use among kids?
Data suggest that programs that combine comprehensive education about tobacco with training on how to overcome peer pressure work best. It also helps to combine school programs with community ones to reinforce the message.

But the long-term solution to adolescent tobacco use has to come from the kids themselves. There are good examples around the country of kids mobilizing to make their schools smoke-free, to ban vending machines, and to act on their own behalf to protect themselves from the addiction.

For example, some kids on Long Island actually started a movement called "Student Coalition Against Tobacco." The group is now forming national chapters around the country to get kids involved in smoking prevention activities.

How effective has the "Smoke-Free Class of 2000" been?
I think it's the type of systemic approach that we need in this country. The smoke-free class kids are in seventh grade now. Since they've been in kindergarten, they've gotten sequential messages about the hazards of smoking. As they've gotten older, they've engaged in anti-smoking advocacy activities, in effect, developing their own solutions to the problem. Of course, it's still too soon to know if these kids will remain tobacco-free.

Once kids have started, what's the most effective way to quit?
There isn't really any method for adults that has helped more than half of the people who try it. Most people who quit smoking don't succeed even when they go to the best programs we have. With kids it's even worse.

There's very little research on how to help a teenager who wants to quit smoking. I don't think we really understand how teen smoking differs from adult smoking and how we can be effective with teens. That's why prevention is so important.

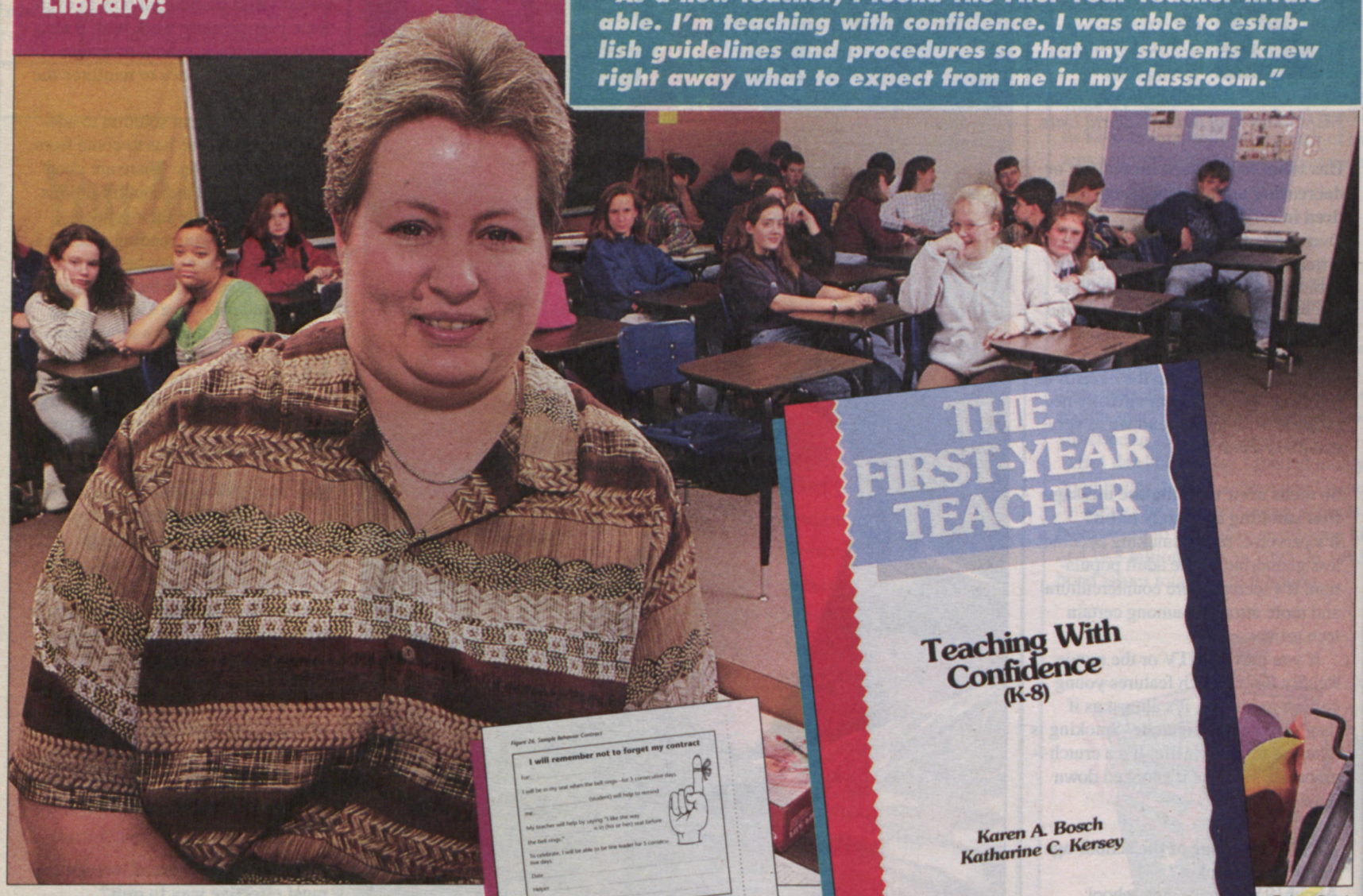
Any recommendations for what educators can do?
First, educators need to push for comprehensive school health education programs that include tobacco. Second, school staff must realize they're role models. They can't be very effective in teaching the hazards of smoking if it's clear that they're smokers themselves.

Third, I think educators and parents can educate and guide kids to solve the problem themselves. Kids themselves are our best hope for making a difference.

If you're a beginning teacher or a student teacher, you can't afford to pass up our special offer on *The First-Year Teacher*!

Here's what Melissa Earnest, a first-year social studies teacher at Kentucky's Caldwell County Middle School, has to say about this unique new resource from the NEA Professional Library:

"As a new teacher, I found* The First-Year Teacher *invaluable. I'm teaching with confidence. I was able to establish guidelines and procedures so that my students knew right away what to expect from me in my classroom."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Robert Bruck

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■ **"The book really helped with tips, hints, and discipline ideas. It covered situations that I might not have thought about until it was too late.**

■ **"The format is practical. When the authors say 'this might be a good idea,' they don't just leave you hanging there. They give you an example—a reproducible sheet you can look at and adapt to meet your needs.**

■ **"My copy of *The First-Year Teacher* is thoroughly dog-eared!**

A book that's not just for beginning teachers

■ **"Someone who has been teaching for a long time will also find *The First-Year Teacher* useful because it gives plenty of updated ideas on portfolios, parent involvement, and time management.**

■ **"The book takes you day-by-day. 'For Day 1, this is what you do, and for Day 2, this is what you do.' I like books with hands-on activities that I can read and use right away. *The First-Year Teacher* is just that kind of book."**

■ **The First-Year Teacher: Teaching with Confidence (K-8)**
by Karen A. Bosch and Katharine C. Kersey
144pp. 1994. (1862-1-10-UM)
Regular Price, $18.95
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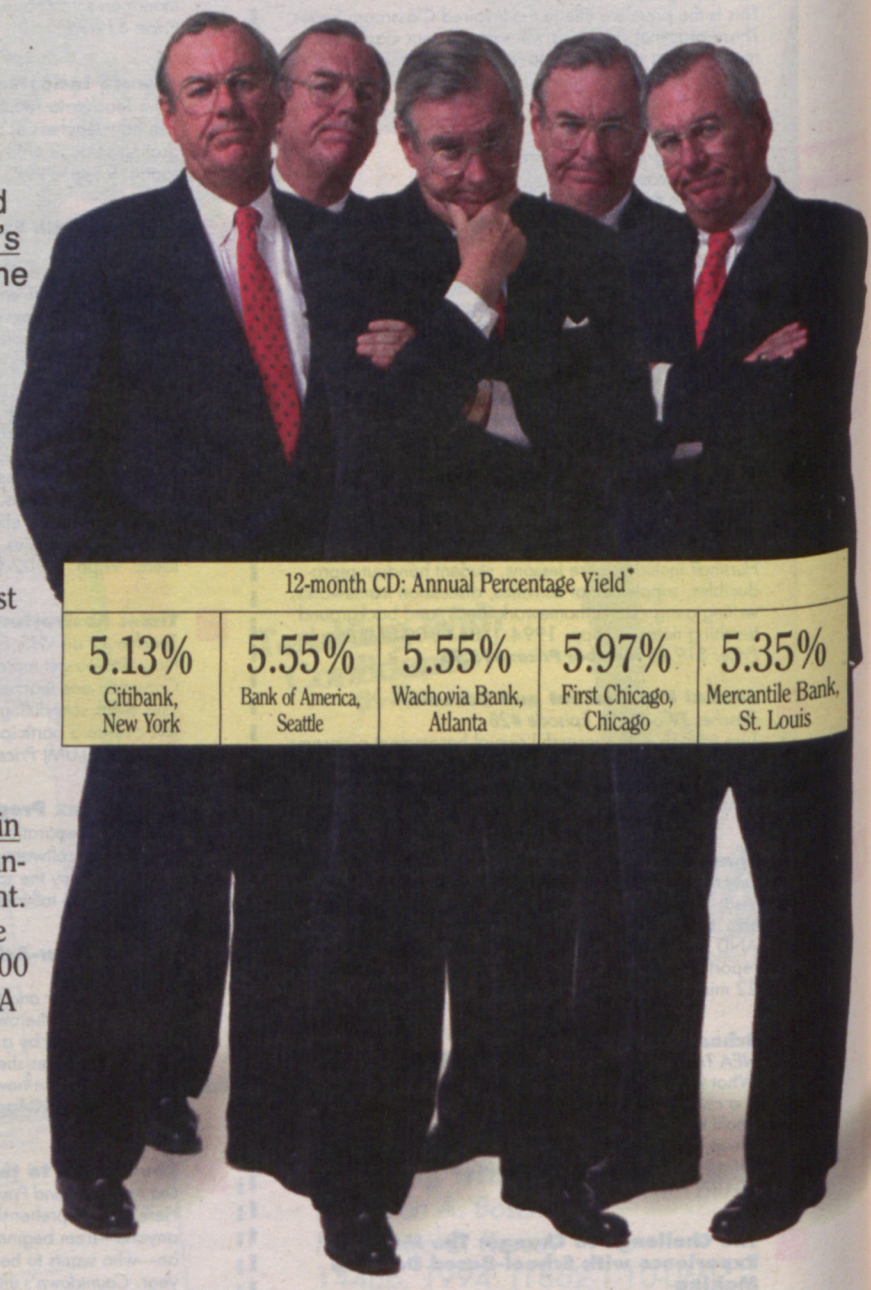

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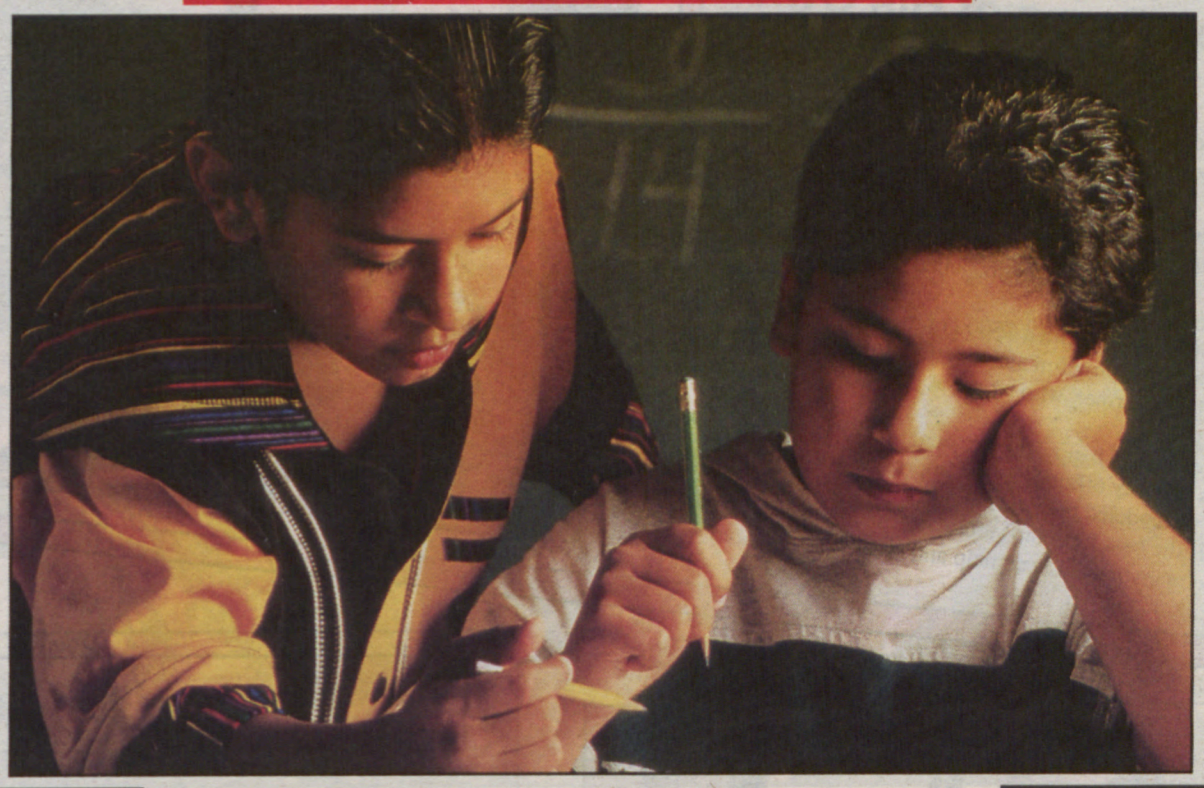
LEGAL TIMES

IMMIGRANT BACKLASH Puts Kids At Risk



On November 8, California voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 187, a move designed to kick 300,000 immigrant kids out of school and onto the streets.

If Proposition 187 is implemented, an estimated 308,000 undocumented students will be kicked out of California's public schools. And those who can't prove they're legal residents will be denied most state funded medical and social services. Education employees will be legally required to turn in any student they "reasonably suspect" is undocumented. (See box below.)

It seems unlikely that the new law will take effect anytime soon.

On November 9, opponents of Proposition 187 filed at least eight lawsuits challenging the legality of the initiative. That same day, a San Francisco state court judge issued a temporary injunction prohibiting California officials from enforcing the new law. A week later, a federal judge in Los Angeles issued a similar injunction.

NEA and its affiliate, the California Teachers Association, took early stands against Prop 187 and campaigned vigorously against it.

CTA President Del Weber called Prop 187 "an outrageous initiative that makes informers out of California teachers."

But supporters of Prop 187, including California Governor Pete Wilson, say 187 succeeded because voters are frustrated by the federal government's inability to stem the tide of illegal immigration into California.

Tough budget times fuel the fire. Although his figures ignore immigrants' contributions to the economy, Wilson claims that California spends roughly $1.4 billion a year educating undocumented immigrants and an additional $1.6 billion providing other services.

The voters have sent a "message to Washington that California is not simply a colony of the federal government to be taxed without limit to pay the costs of federal failure," Wilson said at a post-election news conference.

Message received, but action delayed. Wilson can't do anything to implement the new law while temporary court injunctions are in effect.

Full trials on the merits of the law will be held later this year. At that time, the courts will decide whether to uphold the law or strike it down and issue permanent injunctions. That decision undoubtedly will be appealed.

Wilson has vowed "to take this all the way to the Supreme Court," and California Attorney General Dan Lungren, who is vigorously defending the law against court challenges, believes there is a "reasonable prospect" that the Supreme Court will uphold Prop 187.

Plaintiffs in the cases have raised three key reasons why the initiative is unconstitutional.

- It violates due process because it allows undocumented students to be expelled from school without notice and a hearing.
- It affects immigration matters, which are the sole responsibility of the federal government.
- It denies undocumented students equal protection of the laws in violation of the 14th amendment.

It's the "equal protection" argument that stands the best chance of success.

Thirteen years ago, in a similar case called *Plyler v. Doe,* the U.S. Supreme Court held that Texas violated the equal protection clause by authorizing school districts to deny an education to children not legally admitted to the country.

In an eloquent expression of the value of public education, Justice William Brennan wrote for the Court, "We have recognized the public schools as a most vital civic institution for the preservation of a democratic system of government." Schools play a "pivotal role in sustaining our political and cultural heritage and maintaining the fabric of our society."

If undocumented students are denied the opportunity to get an education, then they will also be denied the "basic tools" necessary to better themselves, Brennan wrote. "Illiteracy," he stressed, "is an enduring disability. The inability to read and write will handicap the individual deprived of a basic education each and every day of his life."

The Texas law must be struck down, he concluded, because it "imposes a lifetime hardship on a discrete class of children not accountable for their disabling status."

To the casual observer, the Court's decision in *Plyler* should end the matter: the Supreme Court has spoken, and that is the law of the land.

But *Plyler* was a five-to-four decision, and four of the Justices in the majority have since left the Court.

Although the Court is supposed to abide by its previous decisions under the doctrine of *stare decisis,* there is nothing in the Constitution that prohibits a later Court from overturning settled precedent, and the Rehnquist Court has done just that in several important cases.

It likely will be three years or more before the Prop 187 litigation reaches the High Court. Wilson predicts the Court "will come to a different conclusion than it did in 1982" when *Plyler* was decided.

Meanwhile, organizers of the successful Prop 187 campaign say they plan to launch similar efforts in other states with large immigrant populations, including Arizona, Texas, and Florida. They also say they will try to get the new Congress to adopt stricter immigration controls.

—Michael D. Simpson
NEA Office of General Counsel

Educators As Immigration Officers

Prop 187 requires that educators turn in any student they "reasonably suspect" is undocumented. The prospect of having to take such action has California educators up in arms.

The day after the election, hundreds of Association members throughout the state gave students a flyer to take home.

The note urged parents to keep their children in school and promised parents that teachers would not "report any child to the immigration police."

One California teacher, Steve Zimmer, has already started a drive to have teachers sign a pledge not to enforce Prop 187. He says turning in undocumented students would "shatter the essential bond of trust between teacher and pupil.

"It's more of a crime to enforce this than to break the law," says Zimmer. To date, 1,000 California teachers have signed the pledge.

Since the election, California officials have threatened swift retribution for any state employee who defies the new immigrant law. Responding to reports that numerous school and hospital officials have already announced they will refuse to ask for documentation, Governor Pete Wilson warned, "If they don't do it, they ought to be fired. This is the law the people have passed, and we will not tolerate scofflaws."

A Job Corps of His Own

Chris Hartlove

When there's a problem, Maryland instructional assistant **Josh Barmer** doesn't waste any time finding a solution, on the job or in the community.

So when Barmer learned that a number of people and small businesses in his community needed help with small jobs, he went to work, setting up a jobs program that matched the jobs with local students who wanted to work.

"We started out last year with a $500 grant and went from there, setting up a little outreach program and a system for organizing our own job corps," explains Barmer, who works at Edgewood High School in Harford County.

"People have been so happy, they're donating money to the program," he says. County officials are so impressed with Barmer's jobs program they've modeled their own program after his.

"Imitation is the best form of flattery" Barmer says. "But I'm not stopping—too many people need help and too many kids need work."

Michael P. Ein

Candy's Dandy

On the boardwalk—that's where she'll be.

Every day after school and all day during the summer, look for **Kathryn Thompson,** a New Jersey library aide, at Steel's Fudge Shop...on the boardwalk in Atlantic City, of course.

For the past 16 years, Thompson has moonlighted as manager of the popular candy store. A fudge aficionado herself, Thompson's struggled to stop nibbling at the profits. "After all this time," admits the vanilla-nut lover, "I'm still tempted by the candy. It's all so good."

To counter the temptation, Thompson's daughter tacked up notes showing the calorie count in each piece of fudge. Store employees also keep carrot and celery sticks in the back to provide munching alternatives.

During the school year, Thompson logs nearly 80 hours a week at her two jobs. During the summer, she works 80-hour weeks at the fudge store alone.

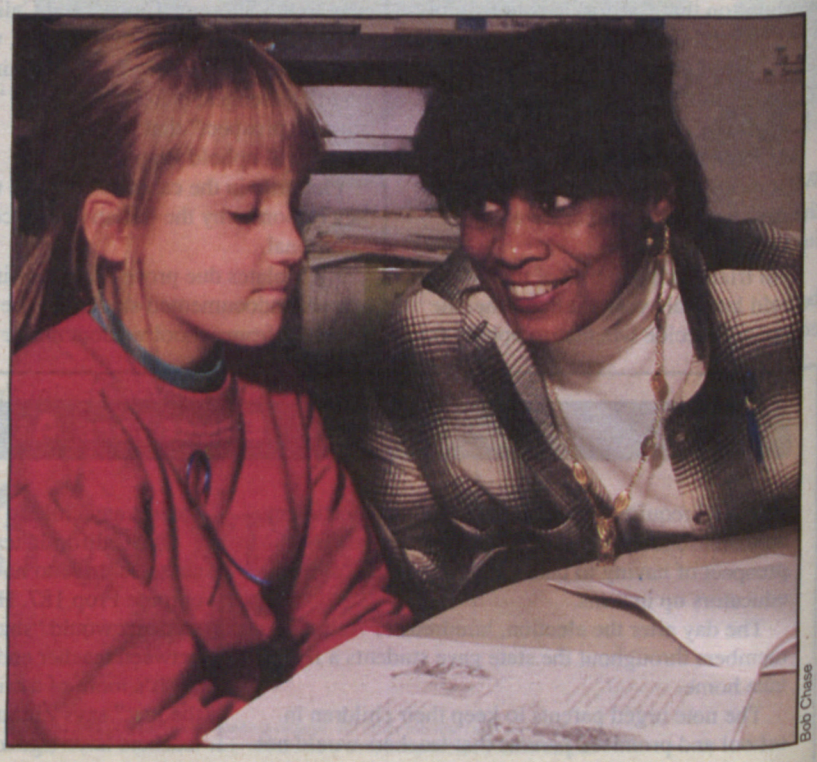
Lapel Language

Cheryl Ervin's not asking you to carry a picket sign, or wear a T-shirt, or give money. She's not even asking you to honk. No, this second grade teacher from Ann Arbor, Michigan asks only that you wear a small, royal blue ribbon if you support public education.

"Educators are feeling bashed at all levels. Everything wrong with society is being blamed on the schools. We need help getting the truth out," Ervin says, "and help supporting public education."

Delegates to NEA's 1994 Representative Assembly agree; last July they voted to support the blue ribbon campaign. Since then, local Associations all over the country have adopted the symbol, many incorporating the lapel garnish in their celebrations of American Education Week last November.

"In the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, people demonstrated in the streets for their causes. In the '90s, people are wearing ribbons," Ervin notes.


Bob Chase

People

Ray Tanaka/Photoplant

Surf, Turf, and Orchids, Too

Ted Kawamura's newest classroom is an open-air, saran-roofed shadehouse overlooking Lahaina harbor on Maui, in Hawaii. There he and his Lahainaluna High School agriculture students raise anthuriums, tropical rhododendrons, orchids, and poinsettias.

The shadehouse was built with materials supplied by the nearby Kaanapali Beach Hotel, which "rents" plants from the school's Future Farmers of America chapter.

"Resort horticulture is a big industry in Hawaii," explains Kawamura, who is director of the school's magnet learning center in agribusiness. "Our graduates find jobs in turf management and in grounds maintenance with hotels, condominiums, and other businesses."

Founded by missionaries in 1841, Lahainaluna High School has been a public school since 1921. Its 800 students include 120 work-study borders, who come from throughout Hawaii—even Micronesia. More than half enroll in the agriculture center whose other teachers—Althea Spenser and Keith Ideoka—are center graduates.

To Be or Not To Be?

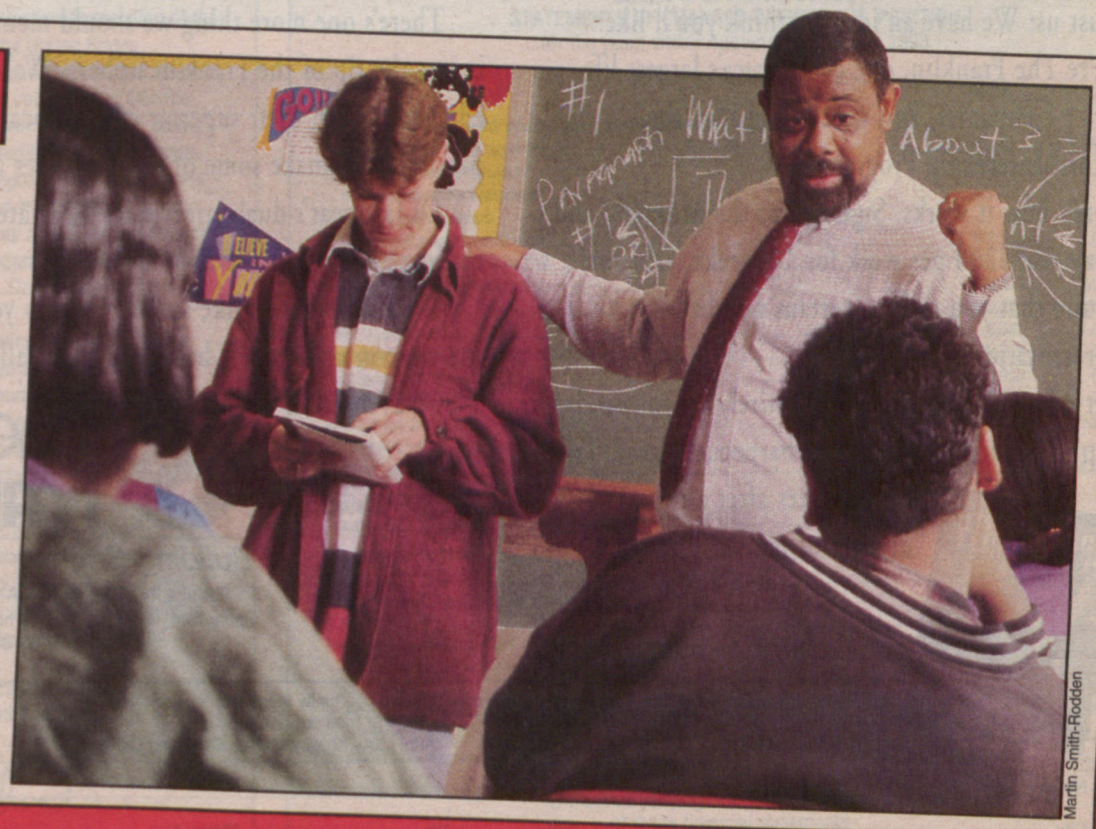
John Scott never intended to be a teacher. He just needed a job.

Now this Hampton, Virginia English teacher is winning awards and becoming something he never dreamed of—a Shakespearean scholar.

Ten months ago, Scott joined Senator Paul Simon and Poet Laureate Rita Dove as a recipient of the Folger Shakespeare Library's Renaissance Forum Award. Scott was one of four Americans to win the award, and the only teacher in the lot.

"When I was a kid in high school, I certainly never intended to teach Shakespeare," he says. "I was mildly dyslexic, and teaching seemed out of the question. Besides, what did Julius Caesar have to do with me?

"I was about ready to quit teaching nearly eight years ago," Scott continues, "Then I went to the Folger theater for a workshop, and I found a way to connect with students. I learned that we're no longer teachers. We're education marketers—and, if packaged well, Julius Caesar sells."



Martin Smith-Rodden

RESEARCH CLUES

Facilitator Communication

By Robert McNergney

Well-meaning people want to believe that facilitated communication works, but researchers say there's no scientific reason to believe that it does.

No educational strategy or classroom technique generates more controversy these days than facilitated communication.

Facilitated communication, or FC for short, is a process by which a facilitator supports the hand or arm of an individual student who has a communication impairment, while that person uses a keyboard or typing device to express his or her thoughts.

Proponents contend that FC reveals the undisclosed literacy of people with autism and moderate or profound mental retardation. This purported breakthrough, first in Australia and now in North America, has stimulated teachers, therapists, and parents to use and believe fervently in the power of FC.

And therein, critics charge, lies the problem: Belief and faith govern the conduct of FC, not science. Scientific support for the efficacy of FC is virtually nonexistent.

Carefully controlled studies suggest that results are due to facilitator manipulation, not to the capacities of those who are being facilitated. The studies reveal almost no support for the hypothesis that FC enables individuals with severe communication impairments to demonstrate unexpected skills.

When facilitators had access to relevant information, many messages were produced that were accurate and appropriate to context.

When facilitators did not have necessary information, the vast majority of messages fell into two categories: plausible guesses by facilitators or interpretable strings of characters.

This past summer, the American Psychological Association called FC "a controversial and unproved communicative procedure with no scientifically demonstrated support for its efficacy."

Proponents counter that carefully controlled studies of FC are anxiety producing for participants, causing them to freeze up or be offended when challenged to prove their competence.

They also argue that facilitators in studies that yielded negative results were unfamiliar with their partners, were inadequately trained, or did not provide appropriate facilitation.

What little support can be found for FC emanates from a few studies and many testimonials. The studies were conducted on small, inadequately described samples by unknown facilitators who had knowledge of the purposes of the research, and thus could have influenced the results.

These studies are supplemented routinely with unsubstantiated anecdotes of FC success that are shared in newsletters, at meetings, and through the media.

Meanwhile, the already formidable case against FC grows steadily stronger. New studies have used large numbers of subjects with various severe disabilities, have controlled information about the purpose of the studies, and have used well-established objective measurement procedures. Results suggest most FC is a conscious or unconscious manipulation of the person with the impairment by the facilitator.

Decent, honest people make mistakes. Foolish people continue to repeat them when faced with compelling evidence of error. To promulgate facilitated communication as responsible treatment is professionally indefensible.

Robert McNergney is professor of education at the University of Virginia. His e-mail address is rfm@virginia.edu.

For more information, read:

Gina Green, "The quality of the evidence," in H.C. Shane, editor, *Facilitated Communication: The Clinical and Social Phenomenon*. San Diego: Singular Press, 1994, pp. 157-225. Green is director of research for New England Center for Autism, Inc., 33 Turnpike Rd., Southborough, MA 01772, 508/481-1015, e-mail: ggreen@shriver.org.

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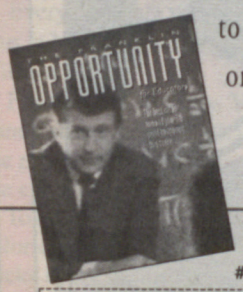

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NEA FINANCIAL REPORT

A Report from NEA Secretary-Treasurer Marilyn Monahan

As NEA Secretary- Treasurer, I am happy to present to you our audited financial statements for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1994, with comparative data for the previous year.

Once again NEA experienced a positive year in 1993- 94! Not only did we increase membership by adding 33,000 new members to our organization, but we also added $593,000 to our total fund balance as a result of net revenues exceeding expenses. This growth adds strength to our already fiscally sound organization and enables us to continue to meet our members' needs and fulfill our mission. Each of you should be very proud of these accomplishments. While columns and columns of financial data can seem quite imposing, let me focus your attention on three key elements of an audit that I believe will be useful in simplifying your analysis of NEA's audit report as well as others you may review in the future.

The first is the "opinion letter." This statement by the auditors summarizes their engagement and lets the reader know that the work was performed in accordance with "generally accepted auditing standards." Once again, ours is a "clean opinion" issued without any qualifying comments. It is the "best" kind of opinion letter to receive.

The second is the ratio of our Current Assets (what we own) to our Current Liabilities (what we owe). This ratio should be at least 2:1 that is, $2 of current assets for each $1 of current liabilities. NEA meets this objective.

The third is the Fund Balance (the net difference between total assets and total liabilities). It should be a positive balance and sufficient to stabilize an organization not only during troubled times but also to serve as a source of funds for special projects, future growth, and other fiscal demands as deemed appropriate. The combined Fund Balance of NEA's General Fund, Special Purpose Funds, and Capital Improvement Fund is $39.7 million, a level at which we can take both pride and comfort.

Accompanying the financial statement and referenced throughout are footnotes provided as supplemental information and narrative backup to the dollars presented, and I encourage you to read them.

Membership growth, fiscal stability, and sound allocation of NEA's resources combined to make 1993- 94 an outstanding year for NEA!

Report of Independent Accountants

To the Executive Committee and Members of the
National Education Association of the United States

We have audited the accompanying balance sheet of the National Education Association of the United States (NEA) (a nonprofit corporation incorporated by an Act of the United States Congress) as of August 31, 1994. We previously audited and reported upon the separate balance sheets of the General Operating Fund and Capital Improvement Fund and consolidated balance sheet of the Special Purpose Funds for the year ended August 31, 1993, which have been combined and are presented for comparative purposes only. We have also audited the related statements of activity and related schedules of Center expenses by type, changes in fund balance and changes in financial position of the General Operating Fund; consolidated statements of activity and changes in fund balance of the Special Purpose Funds and statements of activity and changes in fund balance of the Capital Improvement Fund for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993. These financial statements are the responsibility of NEA's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the National Education Association of the United States as of August 31, 1994, the results of operations and the changes in financial position of the General Operating Fund, the results of operations of the Capital Improvement Fund, and the consolidated results of operations of the Special Purpose Funds for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

As discussed in Note 4 to the financial statements, the National Education Association of the United States changed its method of accounting for postretirement benefits other than pensions, effective September 1, 1993.

Coopers & Lybrand

Washington, D.C.
November 11, 1994

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES BALANCE SHEET

August 31, 1994
(with comparative totals at August 31, 1993)

ASSETS

	General Operating Fund	Special Purpose Funds	Capital Improvement Fund	1994 Total Funds	1993 Total Funds
Current assets:					
Cash and cash equivalents	$17,619,903	$ 1,221,937	$ -	$ 18,841,840	$ 14,823,124
Membership dues receivable	25,909,563	-	-	25,909,563	26,768,527
Amounts due from affiliates and other organizations	2,755,395	-	-	2,755,395	1,442,595
Publication and advertising receivables	203,817	-	-	203,817	765,040
Accounts receivable	-	2,877,845	-	2,877,845	2,744,903
Prepaid expenses	2,051,670	839,422	-	2,891,092	4,416,864
Other current assets	834,366	-	-	834,366	818,416
Total current assets	49,374,714	4,939,204	-	54,313,918	51,779,469
Long- term assets:					
Notes receivable and other assets	77,370	-	-	77,370	99,670
Amount due from General Fund	-	6,918,029	-	6,918,029	8,112,653
Property, plant and equipment, at cost, net (Note 3)	9,427,127	463,897	66,671,951	76,562,975	75,781,376
Total long- term assets	9,504,497	7,381,926	66,671,951	83,558,374	83,993,699
Total assets	$58,879,211	$12,321,130	$66,671,951	$137,872,292	$135,773,168

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES

Current liabilities:					
Mortgage loan payable, current portion (Note 10)	$ -	$ -	$ 957,298	$ 957,298	$ 866,264
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	15,262,885	3,820,718	-	19,083,603	18,668,502
Accrued annual leave	5,139,917	-	-	5,139,917	4,864,287
Amounts held for affiliates and other organizations	193,050	-	-	193,050	292,808
Total current liabilities	20,595,852	3,820,718	957,298	25,373,868	24,691,861
Long- term liabilities:					
Mortgage loan payable (Note 10)	-	-	48,796,564	48,796,564	49,753,862
Accrued severance pay (Note 2)	4,250,375	-	-	4,250,375	3,924,283
Amount due to Special Purpose Funds	6,918,029	-	-	6,918,029	8,112,653
Deferred income, NEA- Retired Program	-	2,447,860	-	2,447,860	2,222,943
Accrued post- retirement benefits (Note 4)	10,339,278	-	-	10,339,278	7,914,278
Total long- term liabilities	21,507,682	2,447,860	48,796,564	72,752,106	71,928,019
Total liabilities	42,103,534	6,268,578	49,753,862	98,125,974	96,619,880
Fund balances	16,775,677	6,052,552	16,918,089	39,746,318	39,153,288
Total liabilities and fund balances	$58,879,211	$12,321,130	$66,671,951	$137,872,292	$135,773,168

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
GENERAL OPERATING FUND
STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN FINANCIAL POSITION

for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993

	1994	1993
Sources of cash and cash equivalents from operations:		
Excess of revenue over expenses	$ 2,234,618	$ 511,132
Increase in excess of revenue over expenses from noncash revenue and expenses:		
Depreciation and amortization	1,338,558	1,066,660
Membership dues receivable	858,964	(917,730)
Publication and advertising receivables	561,223	(239,074)
Prepaid expenses	1,225,251	(594,705)
Other assets, net	6,350	1,653,994
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	592,718	286,644
Accrued annual leave	275,630	693,136
Accrued severance pay	326,092	268,626
Amount due to Special Purpose Funds, net	1,230,376	1,968,069
Total sources of cash and cash equivalents	8,649,780	4,696,752
Uses of cash and cash equivalents:		
Amounts due from affiliates and other organizations, net	1,312,800	(210,907)
Purchase of equipment	4,146,625	2,551,152
Amounts held for affiliates and other organizations	99,758	(4,536)
Transfer to Capital Improvement Fund	-	2,462,463
Total uses of cash and cash equivalents	5,559,183	4,798,172
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	3,090,597	(101,420)
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	14,529,306	14,630,726
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	$17,619,903	$14,529,306

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NEA FINANCIAL REPORT

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITY AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993

	Fund balances, August 31, 1992	Revenue: NEA appropriation	Revenue: Other	Expenses	Fund balances, August 31, 1993	Revenue: NEA appropriation	Revenue: Other	Expenses	Fund balances August 31, 1994
UniServ Fund (Note 2)	$ 808,239	$34,645,151	$ -	$(34,345,846)	$1,107,544	$34,770,000	$ -	$(35,213,826)	$ 663,718
Member Benefits Program	2,746,140	-	16,286,951	(16,573,047)	2,460,044	-	16,673,952	(16,831,311)	2,302,685
National Education Employees Assistance Fund (Note 6)	42,890	100,000	10,847	(76,790)	76,947	100,000	5,853	(56,018)	126,782
NEA- Retired Program Fund (Note 2)	2,710,882	508,580	460,273	(709,241)	2,970,494	719,000	388,933	(1,119,060)	2,959,367
	$6,308,151	$35,253,731	$16,758,071	$(51,704,924)	$6,615,029	$35,589,000	$17,068,738	$(53,220,215)	$6,052,552

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
GENERAL OPERATING FUND
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE
for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993

Fund balance, August 31, 1992	$16,492,390
Excess of revenue over expenses	511,132
Transfer to Capital Improvement Fund (Note 11)	(2,462,463)
Fund balance, August 31, 1993	14,541,059
Excess of revenue over expenses	2,234,618
Fund balance, August 31, 1994	$16,775,677

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
GENERAL OPERATING FUND
STATEMENT OF CENTER EXPENSES BY TYPE
for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993

	1994	1993
Salaries and benefits (Notes 2 and 4)	$ 54,068,535	$ 50,566,085
Grants to, and joint projects with, state and local associations	46,939,015	48,551,607
Kate Frank/DuShane Unified Legal Services Program expenditures	14,340,108	12,595,034
Travel	14,653,291	14,284,349
Publications costs, net of advertising income	3,617,553	3,846,501
Outside services (including consultants, legal, Educators Employment Liability Insurance, printing and National Media Campaign)	20,924,909	19,207,083
Machinery rentals, repairs, materials and supplies	2,717,626	2,143,417
Office expenses	3,927,365	3,562,046
Administrative expenses	5,095,028	6,374,541
Mortgage/building renovation	6,647,560	6,051,131
Total center expenses by type	$172,930,990	$167,181,794

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITY AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993

Fund balance, August 31, 1992	$16,634,663
Depreciation expense	(1,883,813)
Interest expense	(5,186,545)
Appropriation from General Fund (Note 10)	5,970,432
Transfer from General Fund (Note 11)	2,462,463
Fund balance, August 31, 1993	17,997,200
Depreciation expense	(1,945,375)
Interest expense	(5,104,168)
Appropriation from General Fund (Note 10)	5,970,432
Fund balance, August 31, 1994	$16,918,089

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
GENERAL OPERATING FUND
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITY
for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993

	1994 Budget	1994 Actual	1993 Actual
Revenue:			
Membership dues (Note 2)	$172,756,000	$174,811,581	$167,346,237
Other income, fees and services	450,000	354,027	346,689
Total revenue	173,206,000	175,165,608	167,692,926
Expenses by center:			
Center for Advocacy:			
Collective Bargaining and Compensation	1,473,104	1,967,569	1,411,984
Human and Civil Rights	5,256,623	5,276,508	4,587,244
Legal Services	23,543,241	21,914,006	20,543,978
Research	6,203,572	6,126,183	5,899,577
Office for Advocacy	254,693	231,735	231,605
Total Center for Advocacy expenses	36,731,233	35,516,001	32,674,388
Center for Membership and Affiliates:			
Center for Revitalization of Urban Education	1,735,146	1,714,045	817,312
Constituent Group Relations	7,665,784	7,848,108	8,247,852
State Relations	48,424,437	48,875,079	48,015,200
Training and Organizational Development	2,562,763	2,553,299	3,055,011
Office for Membership and Affiliates	545,290	539,704	521,157
Total Center for Membership and Affiliates expenses	60,933,420	61,530,235	60,656,532
Center for Policy and Strategic Planning:			
Center for Strategic Planning	351,720	349,677	184,696
Governance	10,212,448	9,902,556	9,910,241
International Relations	458,991	440,084	454,948
Office for Policy and Strategic Planning	4,494,885	4,745,826	3,784,931
Total Center for Policy and Strategic Planning expenses	15,518,044	15,438,143	14,334,816
Center for Public Affairs:			
Communications	6,981,783	6,955,109	6,781,672
Government Relations	10,116,733	9,864,165	10,409,019
Health Information Network	472,282	472,282	448,220
Publishing	7,507,253	7,579,594	7,552,598
Office for Public Affairs	234,693	231,734	231,606
Total Center for Public Affairs expenses	25,312,744	25,102,884	25,423,115
Center for Teaching and Learning:			
National Center for Innovation	1,873,219	1,872,879	1,514,579
NFIE	500,000	500,000	2,300,000
Professional Standards and Practices	4,364,186	4,240,983	3,891,926
Office for Teaching and Learning	278,619	244,736	243,900
Total Center for Teaching and Learning expenses	7,016,024	6,858,598	7,950,405
Center for Administration and Finance:			
Business and Finance	12,376,130	12,969,390	11,887,680
Conference and Facilities Management	5,785,453	6,380,238	5,916,049
Data Processing	6,125,600	6,199,787	5,450,572
Human Resources	2,435,008	2,430,264	2,420,476
Office for Administration and Finance	507,284	505,450	467,761
Total Center for Administration and Finance expenses	27,229,475	28,485,129	26,142,538
Total expenses	172,740,940	172,930,990	167,181,794
Excess of revenue over expenses	$ 465,060	$ 2,234,618	$ 511,132

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

1. Organization

The National Education Association of the United States (NEA) is a nonprofit corporation incorporated under a special Act of the United States Congress. Its mission statement reads: "To fulfill the promise of a democratic society, the National Education Association shall promote the cause of quality public education and advance the profession of education; expand the rights and further the interests of educational employees; and advocate human, civil, and economic rights for all."

2. Summary of significant accounting policies

Basis of presentation

The financial statements of NEA have been prepared on the accrual basis. To ensure observance with its bylaws, the resources of NEA are classified for accounting and reporting purposes into funds established according to their nature and purpose. The assets, liabilities,fund balances and changes in fund balances are reported in the following fund groups:

General Fund

General Operating Fund

The bylaws of NEA provide that the General Fund shall comprise all income received in the form of dues, interest, dividends, fees, earnings from advertising, sales of NEA publications and payments for services and funds received by gift, bequest, devise or transfer to NEA, which are not specifically designated for deposit in the Capital Improvement Fund.

NEA FINANCIAL REPORT

Special Purpose Funds

NEA has various Special Purpose Funds which consist of restricted funds or funds designated for specific projects and purposes. Special Purpose Funds include activities such as the UniServ Fund, NEA-Retired Program Fund, and the administration of various services such as insurance plans for members. These funds also include the activity of Member Benefits Corporation (MBC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of NEA. MBC provides support to the Member Benefits Program primarily in the areas of membership services, affiliate support, marketing and training.

Capital Improvement Fund

The bylaws of NEA provide that the Capital Improvement Fund shall comprise the properties and permanent investments of NEA and other funds, or properties received by gift, devise, bequest or transfer for deposit in the Fund. Disbursement from the Capital Improvement Fund to acquire new properties or to provide for major long-term improvements in existing properties, must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. Expenditures from this Fund for any other purpose must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Representative Assembly.

General Fund Budget

The budget of NEA is designed to achieve the mission and strategic objectives of NEA. The budget amounts included in the statements of General Fund activity are as approved by NEA's Representative Assembly and amended by the Board of Directors, as set forth in the guidelines approved by the Representative Assembly and the Board of Directors.

NEA- Retired Program

NEA offers retired life memberships through a Special Purpose Fund known as the NEA-Retired Program. Payments to the fund qualify retired members for certain services provided to active members, as well as services designed specifically for retired persons. Payments to the fund are recorded as deferred income when received and amortized over the estimated life expectancy of its members.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash equivalents consist of deposits and securities with initial terms of maturity of less than three months and are recorded at cost which approximates market.

Membership dues

Membership dues are recognized as income over the membership year, which is September 1 through August 31. Dues are assessed to members as provided in the bylaws. An estimated provision for uncollectibles, write-offs and cancellations is charged against membership dues revenue.

In accordance with the bylaws, a percentage of the membership dues is allocated to UniServ grants, (which are included in the expenses of State Relations), whereby NEA provides grants to affiliates to assist in funding their staff representatives whose responsibilities are to implement and coordinate programs of NEA and affiliates.

Accrued severance pay

NEA has a policy entitling employees with over 10 years of service to severance pay equal to 10 weeks of salary. NEA recognizes the liability for severance pay at the time the employee reaches 10 years of employment and is entitled to the severance pay.

Reclassifications

Certain 1993 amounts have been reclassified for comparative purposes.

3. Property, equipment and software development costs

Fixed assets and software development costs consisted of the following at August 31:

	1994	1993
Land	$1,753,777	$1,753,777
Building	77,783,887	77,783,887
Leasehold improvements	2,157,637	1,979,930
Equipment	17,077,872	16,475,884
Software development costs	5,270,021	1,725,385
	104,043,194	99,718,863
Less accumulated depreciation and amortization	(27,480,219)	(23,937,487)
	$76,562,975	$75,781,376

NEA records depreciation using the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of the building of 40 years. Depreciation on the building was approximately $1,945,000 and $1,884,000 in 1994 and 1993, respectively.

NEA capitalizes furnishings and equipment with a cost in excess of $2,500 and depreciates these assets using the straight-line method over 3 to 10 years. Depreciation on furnishings and equipment was approximately $972,000 and $883,000 in 1994 and 1993, respectively.

Software development costs in excess of $2,500 are capitalized and depreciated using the straight-line method over 5 years. These costs, net of accumulated amortization, were approximately $4,720,000 and $1,542,000 at August 31, 1994 and 1993, respectively. Depreciation on software development was $366,463 and $183,230 in 1994 and 1993, respectively. Leasehold improvements are capital additions made to the leased space used by MBC, and are depreciated over the useful life of the lease. Depreciation expense on leasehold improvements was $258,800 and $128,192 for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993, respectively.

4. Retirement benefits

NEA participates in a multiemployer, defined-benefit retirement plan which is noncontributory for NEA employees and which covers substantially all permanent employees. Approximately 54% of the employees covered under the plan are employed by NEA; the remaining 46% are employees of various state and local affiliates of NEA. NEA's policy is to fund retirement costs as accrued.

NEA's retirement contribution expense for the fiscal years ended 1994 and 1993, respectively, were approximately $5,642,000 and $5,568,000. The accumulated plan benefits and plan net assets available for benefits as of the date of the latest actuarial valuation are presented below:

	January 1, 1994	January 1, 1993
Actuarial present value of accumulated benefits:		
Vested	$114,546,622	$101,738,402
Nonvested	18,102,742	16,550,627
	$132,649,364	$118,289,029
Net assets available for benefits	$189,758,061	$172,532,996

The increase in the actuarial present value of accumulated benefits reflects plan amendments including a standard cost of living adjustment for retirement benefits.

The actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits ignores the effects of future compensation increases on the benefits that participants will receive for their past service. If this value is adjusted for projected salary increases, consistent with the assumed rate of return, the adjusted actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits would be approximately $163,735,000 and $150,012,000 as of January 1, 1994 and 1993, respectively.

The assumed rate of return used in determining the actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits was 8.5% for 1994 and 1993. As of January 1, 1994, the retirement plan had no unfunded liabilities.

NEA's employees are also eligible to participate in the 401(k) Salary Reduction Plan of the National Education Association (the Plan) in which the employee can make voluntary, tax-deferred contributions within specified limits. The Plan was established under the provisions of Internal Revenue Code Subsection 401(k) and has received a favorable determination as to its tax status. NEA's contributions to the Plan are based on a set percentage of employee contributions which amounted to approximately $1,381,000 and $1,145,000 for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993, respectively.

In addition to providing pension benefits, NEA provides certain health care and life insurance benefits. Also, effective September 1, 1993, NEA was required to implement Statement of Financial Accounting Standard No. 106, "Employers' Accounting for Postretirement Benefits other than Pensions" (Statement No. 106), which mandates that NEA recognize the costs of providing these benefits on an accrual basis. Previously, NEA recognized such costs on a pay-as-you-go (cash) basis.

As of September 1, 1993, NEA determined its unfunded accumulated postretirement benefit obligation to be $16,719,000 (the "transition obligation"). In accordance with Statement No. 106, NEA elected to defer this transition obligation and recognize it on a straight-line basis over 20 years.

The following items are the components of the net periodic postretirement benefit expense for the year ended August 31, 1994:

Service cost	$ 768,000
Interest cost on accumulated postretirement benefit obligation	1,802,000
Amortization of transition obligation over 20 years	836,000
Postretirement benefit expense	$3,406,000

For measurement purposes, a different annual rate of increase in the per capita cost of covered health care benefits for plan participants who are under and over age 65 was assumed for 1994. The assumed rate for 1995 is 9%. The rate is assumed to decrease gradually to 5.5% over the next 7 years and remain at that level thereafter. The health care cost trend rate assumption has a significant effect on the amounts reported. Increasing the assumed health care cost trend rate by one percentage point in each year would increase the accumulated postretirement benefit obligation as of August 31, 1994 by $4,476,000 and the aggregate of the service and interest cost components of net periodic postretirement benefit expense for the year then ended by $504,000.

A discount rate of 7.5% was used to determine the postretirement benefit expense for the year ended August 31, 1994.

5. Bank line of credit

NEA has a line of credit of up to $10,000,000 from a commercial bank at the bank's prime interest rate. As of August 31, 1994, the bank's prime interest rate was 7.25% per annum. As of August 31, 1994 and 1993, no borrowings were outstanding.

6. National Education Employees Assistance Fund, Inc.

The National Education Employees Assistance Fund, Inc. (NEEAF) is a nonprofit corporation established for the purpose of providing financial and other assistance to member organizations and their individual members involved in disputes over terms and conditions of employment. In this capacity, NEEAF, from time to time, has guaranteed loans made by lending institutions to members who were involved in such disputes. These loans are collateralized by letters of credit from those state affiliates which are members of NEEAF and also by NEA's guarantee in the amount of approximately $2,738,000, expiring through August 31, 1995. In the event of default on a loan, the bylaws of NEEAF provide that the bank shall first draw upon the letter of credit of the state affiliate from which the funds were transmitted and, thereafter, proportionately from all other letters of credit, including NEA's line of credit.

As of August 31, 1994, NEA is contingently liable for $283,028 of the $566,056 in loans guaranteed by NEEAF in the event of default.

7. National Foundation for the Improvement of Education

The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) was created in 1969 by NEA as a tax-exempt public foundation to improve the quality of public education in the United States. NFIE has a separate Board of Directors and operates independently of the NEA. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements do not include the activities of NFIE.

NFIE develops strategies that address the most challenging problems confronting American education. NFIE has designed its direction to develop programs in three focus areas: improvement of students' educational success, improvement of teachers' professional capability, and improvement of the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction.

During the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993 payments totaling $500,000 and $2,300,000, respectively, were made to NFIE. Of the 1993 amount, approximately $1,800,000 was allocated for an endowment that will help fund programs to meet critical needs of students and education employees in years to come. The remaining funds were provided to cover administrative and programmatic support services of the NFIE, as were the 1994 funds.

8. Commitments and contingencies

NEA leases office space at a number of locations under noncancelable operating leases expiring through 1998. Future minimum lease payments under these leases as of August 31, 1994, are as follows:

1995	$186,663
1996	113,252
1997	74,572
1998	39,212
	$413,699

Rental expense for all operating leases was approximately $253,761 and $359,000 in 1994 and 1993, respectively.

NEA has been named as a party in several legal matters, the outcome of which cannot presently be determined. Management believes that the net results of these claims will not have a material impact on NEA.

9. Income taxes

Under provisions of Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code and the applicable income tax regulations of the District of Columbia, NEA is exempt from taxes on income, other than taxes on unrelated business income. Since NEA has incurred a cumulative loss from these unrelated business activities, no provision for income taxes has been recorded in the accompanying financial statements.

10. Mortgage loan payable

A mortgage loan with a 20-year maturity in the amount of $52,000,000 at an average interest rate of 10.125% collateralized by NEA's headquarters office building and personal property was entered into in October 1991.

Mortgage payments of $5,970,432, which includes principal and interest, paid by the General Fund and appropriated to the Capital Improvement Fund, were made for the years ended August 31, 1994 and 1993.

The future maturities of the mortgage loan payable as of August 31, 1994 are as follows:

Year ending August 31,	
1995	$957,298
1996	1,057,897
1997	2,799,007
1998	1,463,441
1999	1,617,916
Thereafter	41,858,303
	$49,753,862

11. Interfund transfer

A permanent transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement Fund of $0 and $2,462,463 has been recorded as of August 31, 1994 and 1993, respectively, representing additional building renovation, construction financing, and mortgage settlement charges.

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Mother's Maiden Name or Code Word (For identification when you request special action taken on your account.)		

ABOUT YOUR FINANCES

Employer	
Position	
Years There	Annual Salary* $
Previous Employer or School Attended	
State Association	
Other Income*	Source

*Alimony, child support, spousal income, or separate maintenance income need not be revealed if you do not wish it considered as a basis of repayment.

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X

Applicant Signature Date

Mail your signed application to:

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P.O. Box 15464
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†Annual Fee	There is no annual fee for the NEA School Days MasterCard or the NEA Premier Gold MasterCard.
Annual Percentage Rate (APR)	15.9% for purchases.
Grace Period for Repayment of Balances for Purchases	At least 25 days from statement closing date.
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Transaction Fee for Cash Advances and Fees for Paying Late or Exceeding the Credit Limit	Transaction fee for bank and ATM cash advances: 2% of each cash advance; $2 minimum, $10 maximum. Premium Access Check® or Preferred Access Check® cash advances: 1% of each cash advance; $2 minimum, $10 maximum. Late Payment Fee: $10 Over-the-Credit-Limit Fee: $10

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2/95

Innovation

How NEA members are changing the way schools work

Stacy Smith, left, and Mike Landness clean one of the eight tanks that make up Glasgow High's mesocosm, which closely recreates natural habitats.

It's Alive!

Teachers in Delaware have moved from the blackboard to the living laboratory, creating in the process a curriculum that almost teaches itself.

It's 9:00 a.m. Monday, and students at Glasgow High School are heading for the beach. On their way, they'll pass streams and tide pools and tall grass. All this without setting foot outside the building.

In this small town outside of Wilmington, teachers and students have traded their traditional Bunsen burners for an enclosed living laboratory—a futuristic world called a mesocosm.

By definition, a mesocosm is a living environment that closely resembles certain naturally occurring habitats. The mesocosm at Glasgow High looks a lot like a high-tech terrarium.

Inside its greenhouse walls are eight rectangular tanks, each sustaining different species of plant and animal life. The tanks vary in size, but resemble large hot tubs.

The tanks rise in salinity levels from tank one—a freshwater marsh, to tank eight—a salt water environment. Pumps and floodgates located in each tank control high and low tide in each environment.

To maintain true-to-life conditions, tidal buckets simulate wave movement in every tank. Each tank also contains an array of organisms, ranging from algae to shrimp.

"Students are letting the problems that come naturally out of this system become the problems that guide their course of study," says biology teacher Jack Bartley. "A few years ago, all we had in high school was an occasional bird walk. Soon, this will be the way to go."

With help from a $752,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, Glasgow teachers are developing a curriculum that may make mesocosm a household word.

It all began rather simply.

"Teachers wanted a curriculum that taught the skills necessary for business and industry," says biology teacher Robert Gross. "We wanted to integrate the disciplines. The problem was, how to do it?"

A small group of educators—all members of the Delaware State Education Association—decided the first step was to move away from cookbook science. They worked together over four years to create a curriculum that integrated subjects and stressed practical experience.

Their final product fused biology, chemistry, mathematics, engineering, and physics into the Mesocosm Environmental Education Project.

Once the teachers outlined their ideas, students, parents, and teachers spent hundreds of hours after-school and during the summer raising funds and developing the details.

Then the Smithsonian gave the project a jump-start by donating the actual mesocosm, which had been a prototype for the Biosphere II project.

"We had to play the stone soup game," explains teacher Catherine Houghton. "Once we got one person to contribute a carrot, and then a tomato, and so on, we no longer had a rock in water. We had the beginnings of soup."

Students actually run the mesocosm, taking readings and monitoring levels under the supervision of teachers. While 26 students are involved in mesocosm independent study projects, any student can visit the lab during the day for information or inspiration.

A biology student may come in to study schools of fish. An English student might visit, then write about the sights and sounds of nature.

For students deeply involved, each day provides a new problem-solving opportunity.

Students in Paul Devine's technology classes work on technical improvements for the project, such as a computerized alarm system that would signal equipment failure.

Agriculture students are dealing with the problem of white flies by introducing predatory beetles into the environment.

"This project takes education reform and the theories that university faculty are talking about and applies them to the curriculum," says Devine.

News travels fast. Educators from Portland, Oregon to Mobile, Alabama are showing an interest in the mesocosm and asking for details.

Planners hope that parts of the mesocosm will travel to other schools and that data will flow back and forth via computer. The curriculum is adaptable—even a school located in the desert can use its principles.

If you'd like more information, send e-mail to Robert Gross at the following address: rhgross@brahms.udel.edu. 302/454-4720.

—Leslie Gross

Glasgow High's unique "classroom" was the inspiration of NEA members (left to right) Catherine Houghton, Bob Gross, Jack Bartley, and Paul Devine.

Photographs by Gary Emeigh

McGRAW PRIZE WINNERS

1988: ***The Honorable Terrel H. Bell***, former U.S. Secretary of Education; ***Helen "Jinx" Crouch***, President, Literacy Volunteers of America; ***Senator Claiborne Pell*** of Rhode Island

1989: ***Dr. Kenneth B. Clark***, Distinguished Professor of Psychology Emeritus, City University of New York; ***The Honorable Richard W. Riley***, former Governor of South Carolina; ***Dr. Kathleen A. Ross, snjm***, President, Heritage College

1990: ***James P. Comer, M.D.***, Maurice Falk Professor of Child Psychiatry, Yale University Child Study Center; ***Clark Kerr***, President Emeritus, University of California; ***Dr. Richard C. Wallace, Jr.***, Superintendent, Pittsburgh Public Schools

1991: ***Dr. Judith Taack Lanier***, Dean, Michigan State University School of Education, and President, Michigan Partnership for New Education; ***Dr. Robert H. McCabe***, President, Miami-Dade Community College District; ***Dr. Theodore R. Sizer***, Professor of Education, Brown University and Chairman, Coalition of Essential Schools

1992: ***Dr. Shirley A. Hill***, Curators' Professor of Education and Mathematics, University of Missouri-Kansas City; ***Dr. Thomas W. Payzant***, Superintendent, San Diego City Schools; ***Dr. Edward Zigler***, Sterling Professor of Psychology, Yale University

1993: ***Sister Mary Brian Costello, R.S.M.***, Chief of Staff, Archdiocese of Chicago; ***Sharon Darling***, President, National Center for Family Literacy; ***The Honorable Booth Gardner***, former Governor of Washington

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For collaborating with teachers and administrators to design a new public elementary school, and then a middle school, in an urban setting that enables all students to learn in their own unique ways; for applying selected educational theories so that teachers use the best practices for instruction; for using multiple methods of appraising student performance, including video presentations; for instituting a new interdisciplinary curriculum framework built around themes all people share in life, with projects and activities that build on the strengths and interests of every child.

HAROLD HOWE II, FORMER U.S. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS

For enriching American education since 1940 as teacher, principal, superintendent, policymaker, Harvard University faculty member, Ford Foundation executive and respected author; for helping ensure that America provides equal opportunity both in and out of the classroom, especially as U.S. Commissioner of Education in the mid-1960s, when he implemented the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and played a major role in directing the desegregation of thousands of schools under the Civil Rights Act; and for sharing his wisdom through scholarship, writing and public service that will make a lasting impact on generations of American children.

ALICIA H. THOMAS, PRINCIPAL
JACKSON-KELLER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

For creating an elementary school in a diverse San Antonio neighborhood where faculty, parents and administrators share responsibility for student success; for introducing a curriculum that helps students understand the interconnected nature of all they learn and how to relate their knowledge to everyday life; for emphasizing language, mathematics and arts instruction and finding additional opportunities to learn beyond traditional school boundaries; for providing health care service and afterschool child care; and for establishing new partnerships with parents and the School of Education at Trinity University in San Antonio.

Announcing the Winners of the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education

The Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education annually recognizes outstanding educators whose accomplishments are making a difference today, and whose programs and ideas can serve as effective models for the education of future generations of Americans.

Each year, a distinguished Board of Judges presents up to three $25,000 awards to individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of knowledge through education. For more information write: Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education, McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1221 Avenue of the Americas, Room 2917, New York, NY 10020.

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FOR YOUR BENEFIT

Are You Ready For College Costs?

Sending a kid to college is an expensive proposition today—and will be an even pricier prospect in years to come. What's a parent to do?

At a 7 percent inflation rate, today's $20,000-a-year private college tuition will cost $67,000 in 18 years. By the same calculation, a state university education costing $8,000 today will cost $27,000 a year by the time a newborn is ready for college.

How can working parents hope to save that much money? Magic won't do it. And you can't count on winning the lottery. The best approach is to start when your children are young and make regular investments in stock.

For the 67 years from 1926 to 1993, stocks returned an average of 10.3 percent a year, according to John Woerth, a spokesman for the Vanguard Group in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. That compares with 5 percent for bonds and 3.7 percent for cash or liquid investments such as money market accounts or treasury bills.

There are two disadvantages to buying stock: 1) Good stocks are difficult to pick. And 2) the stock prices can vacillate sharply in the short term.

The first disadvantage can be overcome by choosing stock mutual funds. The second can be overcome by holding on to them for the long term.

"Stocks are the best investment for college if your kids are young," says Barbara Pope, a financial consultant in Chicago. "But you have to hang in there and ride through the bumps."

Stocks work best when you have 18 years (or longer!) to go before the first tuition bill is due. But when your children reach age 8 to 12, you may want to start assessing your risk.

A good argument can be made for keeping your children's money in stocks until they are 14 if they hold the investments in their own account. At age 14, children pay tax at their own rates.

At that point, you can start moving the money into less volatile investments such as short-term bond funds. When college is three years away, you should have the money for tuition in a savings account or money market fund.

The best way to use mutual funds as college savings is to start small and make regular monthly or quarterly investments. Many fund companies waive the minimum initial investment for investors who sign up for their automatic electronic investment plan.

This type of systematic investment at regular intervals is important for two reasons. First, it disciplines you to maintain your program through thick and thin. Second, it allows you to take advantage of a strategy called dollar-cost averaging.

This method of buying stock or mutual fund shares calls for investing the same amount of money on a regular schedule regardless of the market prices, allowing investors to avoid guessing whether the market is going up or down. The advantage is that the same number of dollars buys more shares when the price is down and fewer when the price is up.

Studies show that people who use this method of investing tend to pay less per share over time than those who purchase shares in a lump sum.

If you're just starting to invest for a young child, start with one fund. A good choice might be a fund like Vanguard STAR, a diversified portfolio of nine different Vanguard funds. Minimum investment is $500. Because of its balance of stocks and bonds, the fund is an ideal one for beginners.

Another possibility is Twentieth Century Giftrust Investors. This unique fund can be purchased only as a gift trust for an individual or an organization, and it must be held for a minimum of 10 years.

Although it is far more volatile than STAR, these restrictions have helped the fund remain small, which makes it nimble and able to take advantage of investment opportunities.

The restrictions have also forced investors to stay put through some declines. For example, the fund lost 17 percent in 1990. But in 1991, it was up 85 percent. Over the past 10 years, this fund has earned the highest total return of any small-company fund, averaging nearly 21 percent each year and growing a $10,000 investment in 1983 to more than $66,000 in 1993. The minimum initial purchase is $250.

In addition to considering the age of your child and the financial requirements of the fund, you should also take into account your own personality. Do you have some appetite for risk? Do you want to turn this into an educational opportunity for your child?

Lou Stanasolovich, a financial planner in Pittsburgh, put 70 percent of his three-year-old son's college money in Templeton Emerging Markets, an extremely volatile fund that was up 74 percent in 1993 and down sharply in the first half of 1994. "I would caution anybody who invests in a fund like this to expect 60 and 70 percent gains and also 30 percent and 40 percent losses," he says.

Financial planner Barbara Pope has 10-year-old Jessica's college money in the Acorn Fund. It's a top-performer that invests in small U.S. companies, Acorn International, its foreign counterpart, and an index fund that follows the S&P 500 stock index.

And Don Phillips, Morningstar's publisher, decided to teach son James, who was three last September, a lesson with his college money. Phillips chose the Pasadena Nifty Fifty because it invests in large growth stocks, and because he felt it would be a learning experience.

For example, the fund invests in Coca-Cola, Toys 'R' Us, McDonald's, and Walt Disney. "I want his investment to have names he'll understand," Phillips says.

The key to any successful investment program is to get started, make regular investments, and stick with it.

"Letters pour in from our investors who started out small and eventually accumulated enough money to put a kid through college or buy their dream home," says Gunnar Hughes, a spokesman at Twentieth Century. "The important thing is to get started on that long, forced march."

—Mary Rowland

Note: The stocks and mutual funds mentioned in this article are recommended solely by the writer and are not endorsed by NEA Member Benefits.

Saving Suggestions

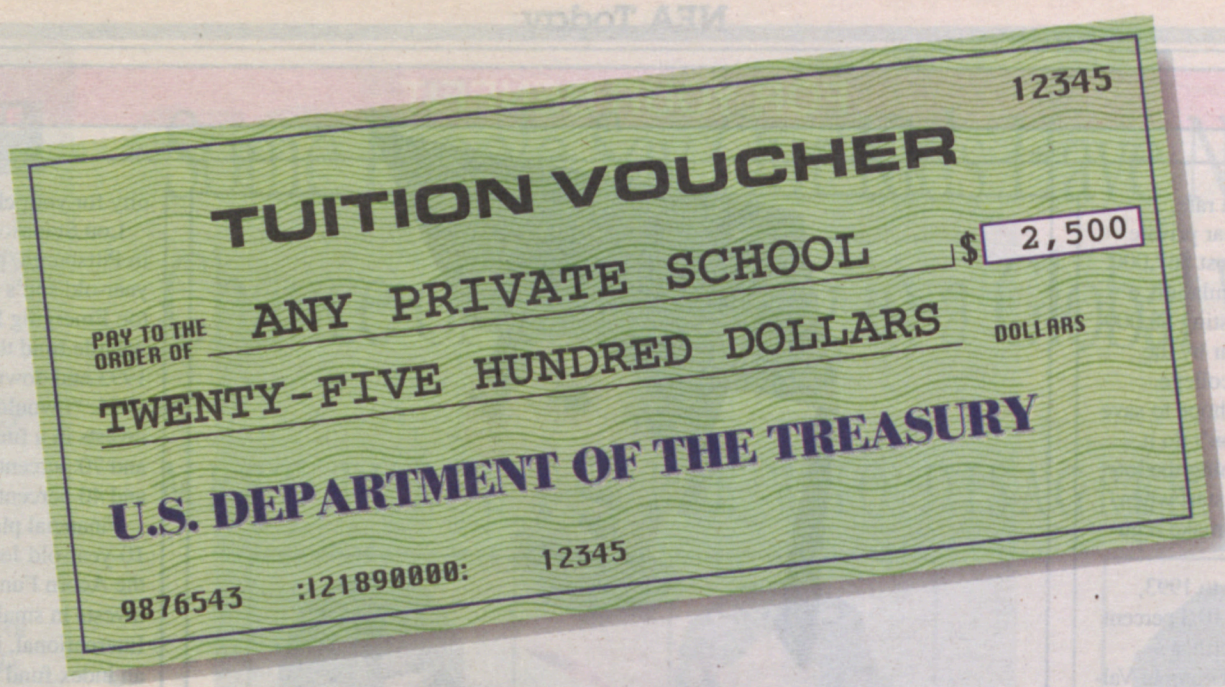
Most financial planners suggest you have at least three to six months income stashed away in cash for that proverbial "rainy day." That's why NEA Member Benefits developed savings and investment programs—to help you make your hard-earned dollars work harder for you.

The NEA-Sponsored FDIC-Insured Money Market Account offers higher-than-average returns, and, as an NEA member, you get a bonus introductory rate.

With the NEA-Sponsored Gold-Certificate CD, you can enjoy even higher interest, guaranteed return, and the security of knowing that each account is FDIC- insured up to $100,000.

The NEA Valuebuilder Annuity offers a wide variety of tax-deferred investment options to help you plan for a secure retirement.

Whether you're saving for your dream retirement home or next summer's vacation, let NEA Member Benefits help you meet your investment goals. For more information, call 800/637-4636.



This Check Could Destroy Public Education

Today in Congress some politicians are working to pass voucher legislation that would use public funds to pay tuition at private schools.

And, for the first time ever, there may be enough votes in Congress to make vouchers the law — nationwide. In fact, in 1994, voucher advocates fell only five votes short of enacting voucher legislation in the Senate.

You can take a stand against private school vouchers by supporting NEA-PAC.

NEA-PAC is the political arm of the NEA. Through voluntary contributions to NEA-PAC, NEA members help elect pro-education legislators who give NEA members clout in Congress. By contributing to NEA-PAC, you tell Congress that educators won't stay on the sidelines while Congress takes money away from public schools.

For just 50 cents a week (or $24 per year) you can send a message that no one in Congress will ignore. Stand up against private school vouchers. Give to NEA-PAC today.

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The National Education Association Political Action Committee (NEA-PAC) collects voluntary contributions from Association members and uses those contributions for political purposes, including, but not limited to, making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of friends of education who are candidates for federal office. Contributions to NEA-PAC are voluntary; making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the Association, and members have the right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. Although NEA-PAC requests an annual contribution of $10, this is only a suggestion. A member may contribute more or less than the suggested amount, or may contribute nothing at all, without it affecting his or her membership status, rights or benefits in NEA or any of its affiliates.

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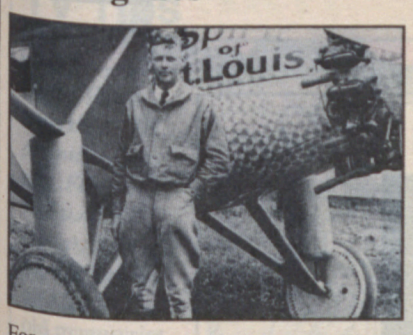
If you wish to contribute to NEA-PAC, please write the amount of your contribution in the space provided for either payroll deduction or a cash contribution.

Please complete this form and mail to: NEA-PAC, Department #40, Washington, DC 20055.

1951

IDEA EXCHANGE

Roaring '20s



For my eighth grade social studies students, working hard on a project that combines computer skills with research skills brings unique recognition for each. I assign each student a well-known person from the 1920s to research, using a variety of sources. They type their reports—along with a bibliography—on a word processor. Then each student either copies or creates a graphic to illustrate the theme.

The reports, each bearing the student author's name, are then compiled into a class booklet and sent to a fifth grade class in our district that's also studying the '20s. The booklet becomes part of both class's libraries.

Margy Nurik
Lakeside School
Pompton Lakes, New Jersey

Friendship Soup

My early childhood education students really enjoy making "friendship soup." The process helps boost their self-esteem—and builds friendships, too.

On soup day, each child brings a canned or fresh vegetable or fruit to class. Then we cook the soup by adding the vegetables to a stock I've already started heating in a crock pot. We arrange the fruit on a platter to be shared.

As the children sit around the table slurping soup and eating fruit, they often say no meal ever tasted so good.

Nancy Kaczrowski
Adrian, Ellsworth, Magnolia, and Luverne School Districts, Minnesota

Moose Mania

Rumors were circulating about a school bus mishap involving a moose. My fifth grade computer class, understandably, found it hard to settle down.

To stop the conversations and speculation, I had the kids *write* about the rumors they'd heard, rather than talk about them. Later, when things calmed down and the greatly exaggerated stories proved false, we discussed the situation.

Lynn Mercier
Wells Junior High School
Wells, Maine

Trophy Day

I encourage my fourth graders to look for good in others by having them vote for the class member who's shown the most effort or improvement over the previous two weeks. The winner receives my special Classroom Trophy.

Although the trophy is an inexpensive one, it's quite treasured. On Trophy Day, before the students nominate possible recipients, we review the qualifying criteria such as—always helps others, tries very hard to follow directions, and more.

We start with six nominations, then by secret ballot narrow the roster to two and select the final winner. The two finalists then enter a run-off, also by secret ballot.

Besides the trophy, the winner also receives a Good News card sent home and recognition throughout the school via the morning announcements.

Pat Hofer
West Salem Middle School
West Salem, Wisconsin

Send Your Ideas

Have any tips for this column? Pass them along in one of five ways:

- By mail to Idea Exchange, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.
- By phone, 202/822-7201.
- By FAX, 202/822-7206.
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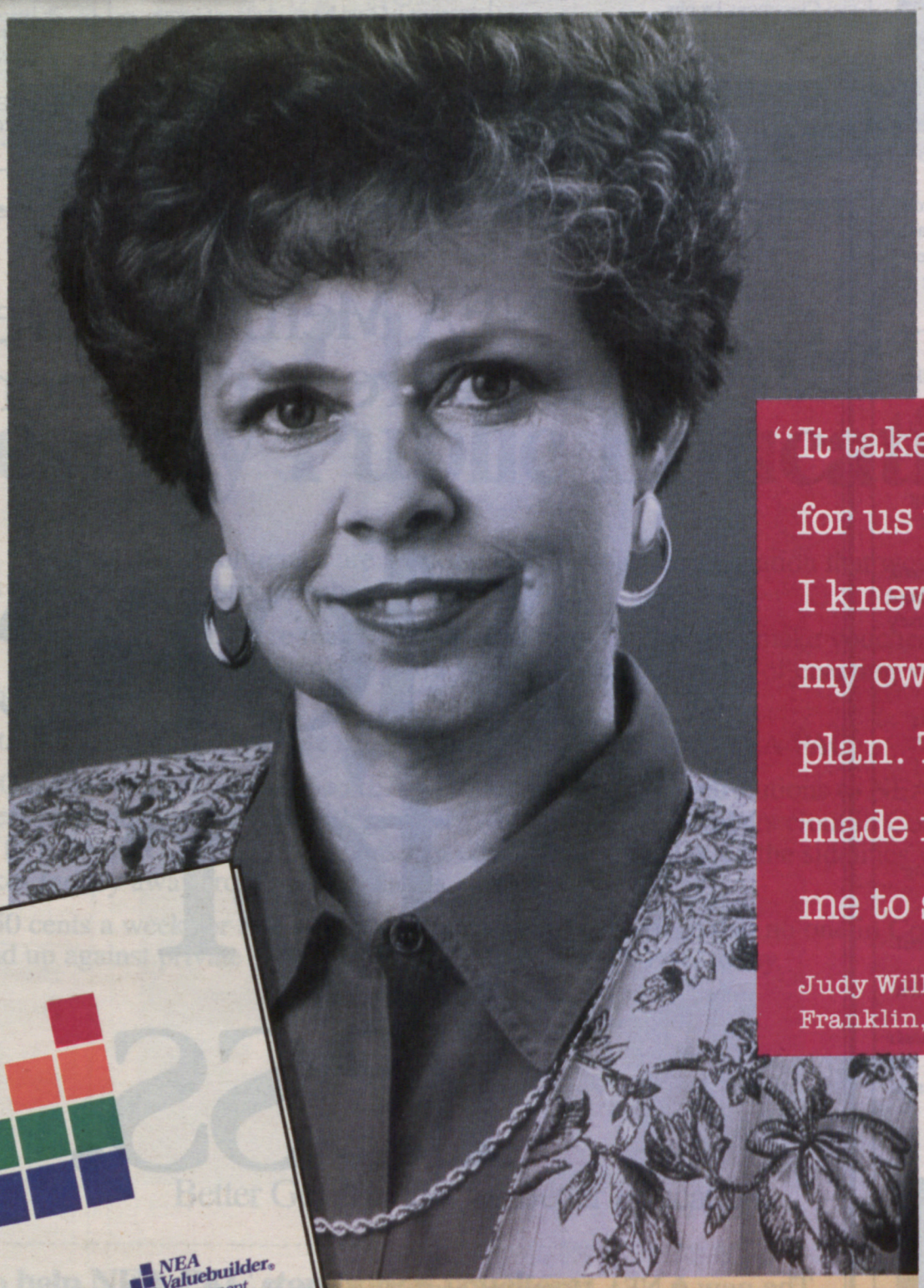

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Judy Williams, Teacher
Franklin, Tennessee

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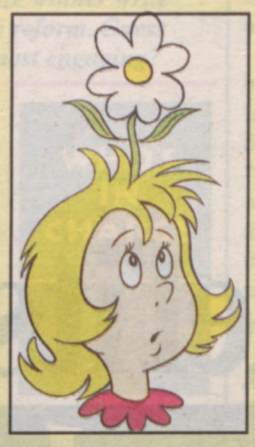
RESOURCES

TV Tips



Daisy-Head Mayzie—*TNT, premieres Sunday, February 5, 7 p.m. ET., repeats Feb 11, 12, 19.* Based on a 20-year-old manuscript that Audrey Geisel, wife of Theodor ("Dr. Seuss") Geisel, discovered after her husband's death, this new, animated musical special tells a cautionary tale of the perils of overnight success .

Race to Freedom: The Underground Railroad—*The Family Channel, Friday, February 10, check local listings for time.* This film tells the story of the secret routes to freedom. A free teaching resource for grades 6-12 is available; call 804-459-6169.

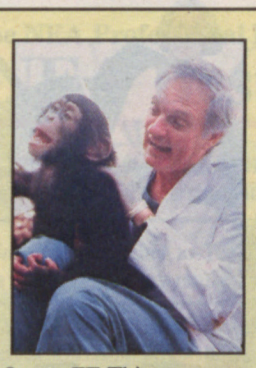
The Promised Land—*The Discovery Channel, February 12-18, check local listing for times.* This five-hour mini-

series, narrated by Morgan Freeman, details the migration of African Americans from the South to the industrial North. Contemporary and traditional composers and singers combine forces to create the musical score.

Tad—*The Family Channel, Saturday, February 12, 7 p.m. ET.* This two-hour presentation depicts the relationship between Abraham Lincoln and his youngest son, Tad. Set against the backdrop of the Civil War, the film recounts how the times affected the Lincolns in the White House. Kris Kristofferson and Jane Curtain play Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln.

Mystery of the Senses—*PBS, Sunday, February 19 through Tuesday, February 21, 8-9 p.m., and Wednesday, February 22, 8-10 p.m. ET.* This five-part NOVA miniseries celebrates the universe of the senses and how cultural values influence them. For a NOVA teacher's guide, send $5 to WGBH, NOVA Teacher's Guide, Box 2222-F94, South Easton, MA 02375.

People of the Forest: Chimps of the Gombe—*The Discovery Channel, Saturday, February 25, 8-10 p.m. ET and 11 p.m.-1 a.m. ET.* This two-hour award-winning show features the footage of Hugo van Lawick and the writings of Jane Goodall. Take an intimate look at a family of wild African chimpanzees—their behaviors, emotions, and struggles.



National Geographic Explorer: Blues Highway—*TBS, Sunday, February 26, 9 p.m. ET.* This program tells the story of the evolution of the blues.

Sea World Presents: Discovering Wetlands—*March 3, syndicated series, check local listings.* Home to thousands of native species, wetlands serve as giant nursery areas for alligators, turtles, fish, and birds.

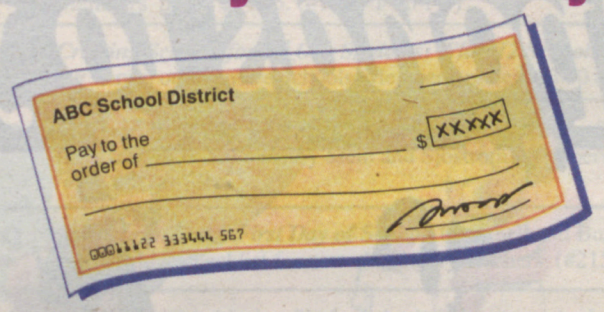
These listings are provided by KIDSNET, a computerized clearinghouse in Washington, D.C.

Teacher TV

Don't forget to tune into Teacher TV, the weekly magazine-style program coproduced by NEA and the Learning Channel. Teacher TV airs Sunday afternoons, 12:30-1 p.m. ET. Here's a list of upcoming episodes.

February 5: Active Learning
February 12: Cross Age Teaching
February 19: Economics of Education
February 26: Appreciating Diversity

Protect your salary



Protect your dreams

Protecting your dreams is not always easy. But one way to do it is to safeguard your income against the chance that you won't be able to earn a living because you're disabled. NEA Member Benefits is pleased to announce a newly enhanced disability income protection plan that can meet the needs of NEA members.

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nea Member Benefits

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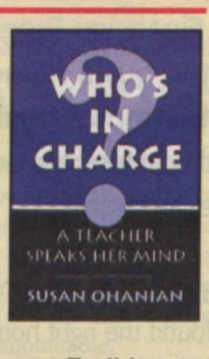
TFA025

BOOK BEAT

Essay Alert

A teacher, a panel of economists, and a Nobel Prize winner write about education reform. Guess whose book is most engaging?



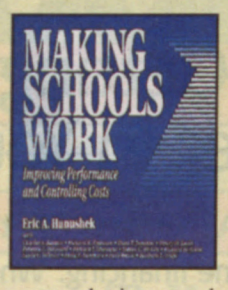
Who's In Charge? A Teacher Speaks Her Mind. Susan Ohanian. Boynton/Cook Publishers. 249 pp. $19.95.

"Mine is a language of incident looking for righteousness," writes veteran English teacher Susan Ohanian, introducing her provocative and fun collection of short essays on the art and craft of teaching.

Righteousness—well-earned, of course—isn't hard to find here. Ohanian's book is full of disdain for *Silas Marner*, computer-aided reading instruction, textbook content, discipline codes, and standardized tests. A good read, something to think about, *and* a righteous snit—who could ask for more?

Making Schools Work: Improving Performance and Controlling Costs. Eric A. Hanushek with 12 others. The Brookings Institution. 195 pp. $14.95.

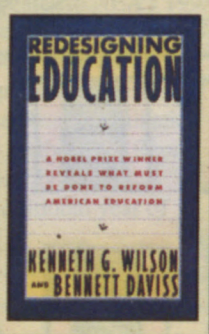
Put economists around a table talking about education and what do you get? A reality sandwich that might be nutritious—but hardly appetizing.



To save you a bit of time, here's the predictable meat: "School performance can be improved, without increasing expenditure, through a reform program guided by three broad principles—efficient use of resources, performance incentives, and continuous learning and adaptation."

Redesigning Education. Kenneth G. Wilson and Bennett Daviss. Henry Holt and Company. 254 pp. $27.50.

Wilson won the Nobel Prize for physics in 1982; Daviss is a magazine writer. The two have put together yet another analysis of why today's schools are failing.


REDESIGNING EDUCATION
A NOBEL PRIZE WINNER REVEALS WHAT MUST BE DONE TO REFORM AMERICAN EDUCATION
KENNETH G. WILSON AND BENNETT DAVISS

But they've added a few new and worthy topics: why tinkering isn't enough, why good ideas don't spread from school to school, how progressive change can be incorporated into "an infrastructure of educational redesign," and what's out there that *is* working.

—Stefanie Weiss

The NEA Professional Library's Top Ten

NEA Bestsellers

Current Rank		Previous Rank
1	***Student Portfolios,*** NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Insights into using portfolios to assess and enhance student learning. (#2901-1-00-FB)	[3]
2	***Innovative Discipline,*** NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) New discipline strategies that teachers say really work! (#2904-6-00-FB)	[6]
3	***Toward Inclusive Classrooms,*** NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Students with special needs *can* learn with their peers. (#2903-8-00-FB)	[4]
4	***Time Strategies,*** NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Ways busy teachers restructure school time. (#2902-X-00-FB)	
5	***School-Based Change,*** NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Tips, tricks, and techniques for avoiding the pitfalls of school restructuring. (#2905-4-00-FB)	
6	***The First-Year Teacher: Teaching with Confidence (K-8),*** by Bosch and Kersey. Members' price: $14.95. (#1862-1-10-FB)	
7	***Creating Schools for All Our Students: What 12 Schools Have To Say,*** by Working Forum on Inclusive Schools. Members' price: $13.00 (#1865-6-10-FB)	
8	***Flirting or Hurting? A Teacher's Guide on Student-to-Student Sexual Harassment in Schools,*** by Stein and Sjostrom. Members' price: $15.95. (#1864-8-00-FB)	[5]
9	***Countdown to the First Day of School,*** by Schell and Burden. ($4.95) A must-have checklist for new elementary teachers. (#2150-9-00-FB)	[2]
10	***At-Risk, Low Achieving Students in the Classroom,*** by Lehr and Harris. ($9.95) Covers over 100 practical ideas for improvement. (#3338-8-00-FB)	[8]

The numbers in brackets indicate last month's rank, if any. All the resources listed above are published by and available from the NEA Professional Library, a service for NEA members financed solely by the sale of books and other professional development materials to the education community. To order any book listed here or to obtain more information, call 800/229-4200.

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Summer Fellowships on Teaching the Holocaust and Jewish Resistance. Overseas seminar for secondary school teachers, July 4-July 28, 1995 in Israel with a stop in Poland. Sponsored by the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, Educators' Chapter of Jewish Labor Committee and AFT. Program includes lectures by noted scholars, visits to prominent Holocaust institutions, excursions to historic sites. Teachers pay $1,850, covering air travel from New York, hotels, two meals a day, some trips. Application deadline: April 15, 1995. For information and application, write: Jewish Labor Committee, 25 East 21st Street, New York, NY 10010.

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NEW

The NEA Home Financing Program℠

It Takes The Work Out Of Getting A Mortgage... And Puts Buying Power In Your Hands.

The NEA is proud to present a breakthrough benefit for NEA members. It's the NEA Home Financing Program,℠ provided by Prudential Home Mortgage, a leader in home financing. Whether you want to buy a home, are refinancing the one you own, or are looking for a home equity loan, we believe the NEA Home Financing Program offers the best overall combination of service, benefits and value on the market today. Here are some of the benefits you'll enjoy when buying a home or refinancing a mortgage with the program.

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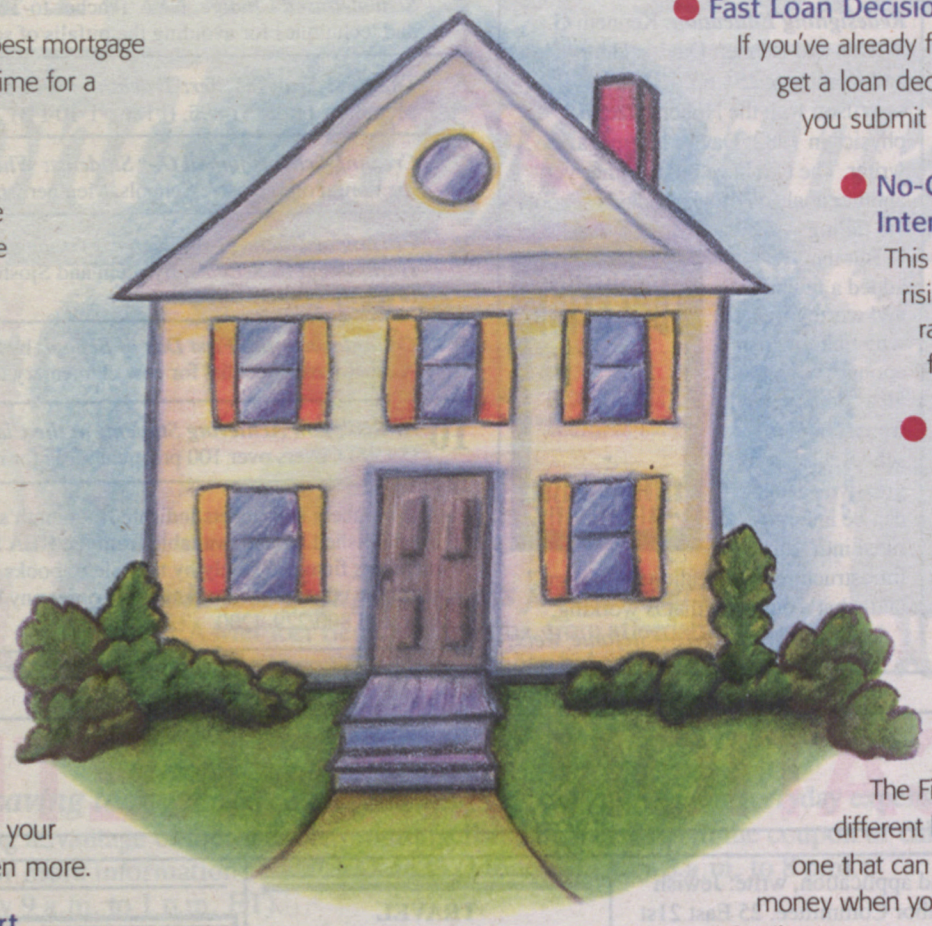

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*** Eligibility for the low down payment options is limited to primary, purchase transactions and a maximum loan amount of $203,150. Other conditions apply. Contact a mortgage representative for details.

The NEA is not offering or originating any loans in connection with this program. NEA Home Financing Program is a service mark of the NEA Member Benefits Corporation.

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IN THE NEWS

NEA, AFT Stop Merger Talks

NEA and the American Federation of Teachers agreed to end discussions of a possible merger in December when it became clear that "many of the internal issues separating the two organizations were insurmountable."

In a joint statement, NEA and AFT leaders said that while they "shared a clear and overarching vision for having one organization represent educational employees, they were unable to bridge significant organizational differences."

The statement stressed that both organizations "remain committed to the concept of merger at the national level and are hopeful that the discussions can resume sometime in the future."

Despite the end of merger talks, NEA President Keith Geiger and AFT President Al Shanker will continue to meet to explore ways the two organizations can work together.

"Threats to public education, public education employees, and unionism in this country demand a united front," Geiger said. "We intend to find ways to cooperate and pull together whenever possible."

Merger talks started 18 months ago when delegates to NEA's 1993 Representative Assembly voted to begin discussions with AFT leaders about the possibility of merging into one national organization for educators. At the 1994 Representative Assembly, delegates approved an additional year of talks.

SHORT TAKES

The 1995 NEA National Conference, *Safe Communities: Safe Schools* will be held April 7-9 in Los Angeles. The conference will help NEA members and other conference participants develop strategies that can make our communities safe places to live and learn. For more information about the conference, call 800/632-0086.

WORKING FOR YOU

Ensuring a Strong Defense

Carolyn Salisbury

Almost no one knows the ins and outs of NEA's insurance coverage and legal programs-like Sonia Jasso Yilmaz. That's why NEA employees and state affiliates turn to her to help decipher the legal terms and conditions of coverage through NEA's Educators' Employment Liability (EEL) Program and through the United Legal Services Program (ULSP).

When NEA members and state affiliates call, Jasso Yilmaz is ready. Recently, an Arizona Education Association staffer called to find out if a support worker who's required to care for a student with a tracheotomy is insured.

Yes, in this particular instance, Jasso Yilmaz said, since this care isn't considered a medical art and is a requirement of his or her job.

In addition to analyzing and interpreting EEL coverage issues, Jasso Yilmaz performs a variety of other administrative tasks. Each year when the EEL contract expires, for instance, Jasso Yilmaz helps negotiate new terms with insurance carriers.

"It's my job to do the behind-the-scenes work to help find the broadest coverage possible for our members at the best rates," she says.

Jasso Yilmaz is one of three professional staff members in the Legal Services Department responsible for helping states administer the ULSP. She travels to states in two NEA regions about nine times a year to conduct two-day site reviews. Jasso Yilmaz covers the Midatlantic and Southeast regions.

"My job requires analytical and administrative skills," Jasso Yilmaz says. "I enjoy applying these skills to help the state affiliate legal services programs provide the best possible legal defense for all our members."

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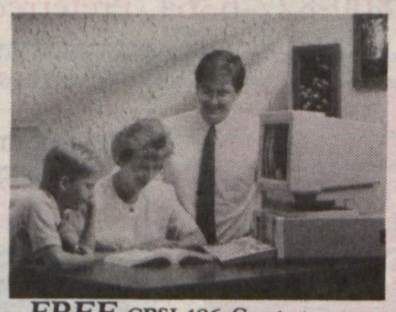
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Online

NEA members using technology to improve education

Electronic Rush

Teachers at an elementary school in California got a lesson from the school of hard-drives. They know now what they've been missing.

In Marysville, California, teachers at Cedar Lane Elementary School—about 30 in all—can flip on the power switches to over 140 computers.

It wasn't always so easy. Fifth grade teacher Michael Schlussler remembers back five years when there were just 20 computers in the entire school, and most teachers considered DOS a foreign language.

Some teachers were so intimidated by the new technology, he says, they wouldn't even get close to the new fangled machines.

Today, notes Schlussler, the atmosphere at Cedar Lane couldn't be more different. Teachers—once only casual spectators to computer usage—feel energized by the new technology, and they're using computers to make a real difference in student learning.

What caused the dramatic change?

"We realized we couldn't do quality work with our students without understanding the new equipment," says Schlussler.

So Cedar Lane teachers formed a committee with the goal of planning the school's technological renewal. One of the group's recommendations: creating a 3-to-1 ratio of students to computers.

Teacher interest in technology impressed school administrators, who then ordered eight new MacIntosh computers for teachers who'd requested them.

Still, not all teachers bought into the new technology. What really hooked them, Schlussler says, was the capacity for inter-school communication. "Teachers saw and experienced life without an intercom and the ease of sending messages without interrupting classes," he says.

Soon, demand for new computers started to outgrow supply.

The new technology, teachers found, opened up possibilities for Cedar Lane's unusual student body. Sixty percent of the school's 1,000-plus students are Laotian refugees whose language is Hmong; 15 percent are Spanish speakers. Some children, Schlussler explains, come to Cedar Lane without any previous schooling at all.

In the past, teachers had tried to conquer language barriers through cooperative learning and small group set-ups. But they soon found that technology could enable them to do far more.

Schlussler has nine computers in his classroom, and the Laotian kids use software that helps with the alphabet and sounds of words. "This is where we have to start them. Then we move on," says Schlussler.

The Laotian students also use computerized problem-solving situations that force them to communicate with other children who don't have language limitations.

"One of my Laotian students was able to show another kid how to use a computer program and not a word was shared," says Schlussler.

"Whether we like it or not, children understand computers better than adults," he adds. "Children cope best with familiar things, and electronic media is what they know."

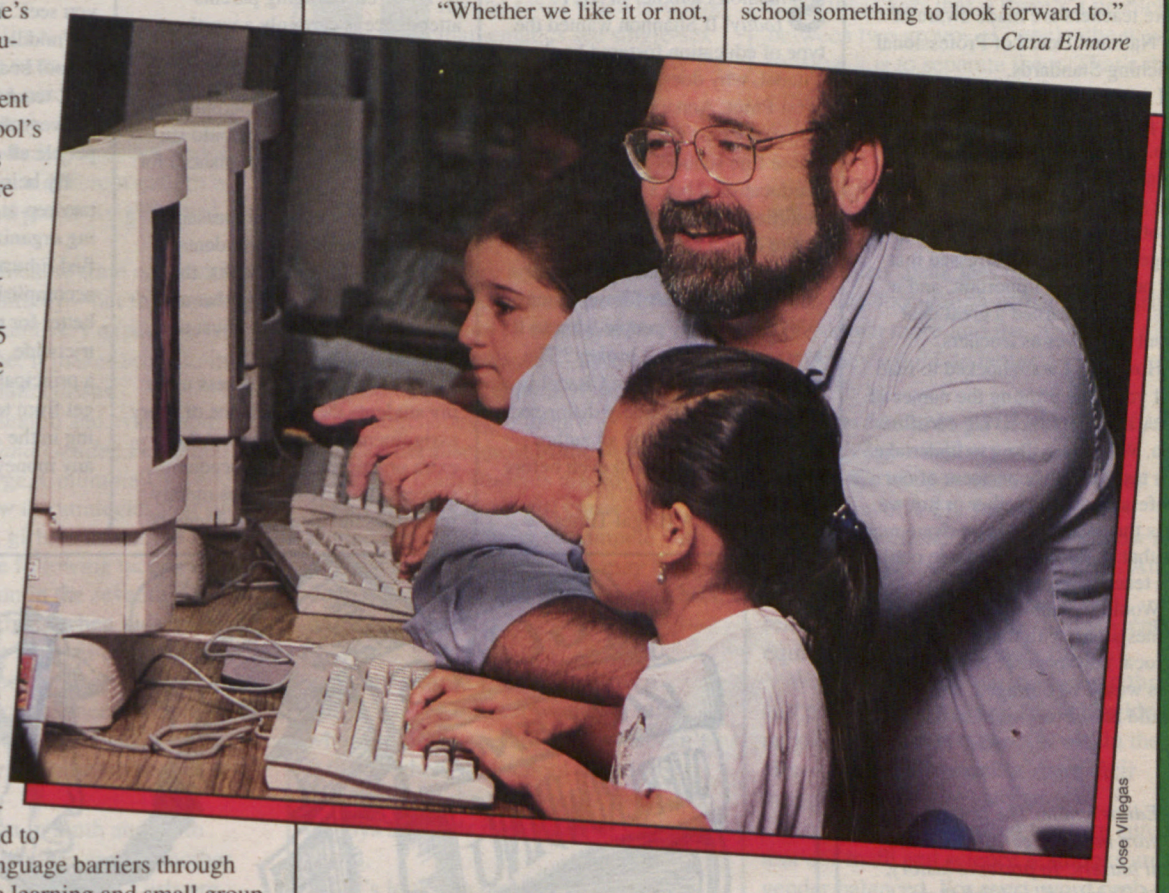
The technology, Cedar Lane teachers have learned, also helps build links between school and home.

Frequently students take home presentations they've prepared using school equipment. And parents come into the school and visit the computer parenting lab for support and hands-on instruction.

Parents are even seen leaving the building with a computer in hand—older models are checked out for home usage.

And more is on the way, Schlussler says. "Exploring new avenues that provide new learning and teaching opportunities gives everyone at our school something to look forward to."

—Cara Elmore



Jose Villegas

Fifth grade teacher Michael Schlussler says computers help bridge the language barrier and make teaching Laotian students easier.

GETTING STARTED

NEA Online, a special service for NEA members, appears on America Online, the nation's fastest growing information network. An $8.95 monthly NEA Online subscription offers unlimited time within NEA Online plus five free hours on America Online, with its easy-to-use Internet access. To subscribe, call 1-800-827-6364 for your free installation kit. Be sure to give the special NEA Online preferred customer number 10148.

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TIPS FOR USING NEA ONLINE

Linda MacCleave,
Brookland Middle School, Midlothian, Virginia
NEA members share wonderful ideas in the NEA Online "conference room." I'm participating in a project I learned about from an online colleague in Connecticut. Teachers from a half-dozen states are having students do reports on where they go to school and live, then transmit them online. Our students can learn about students from other parts of the country and about the power of technology. To find out when we meet in the NEA Online conference room, click "Online Conference Schedule." Keyword: "NEA meeting."

Letters

No Names, Please

It's great that articles like "One Giant Step for Teaching" (December) are being published so that more teachers are made aware of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

I participated in the field test for the English/Language Arts certification. Seven from our small school district went through this process. The school district is very proud of all of us for undertaking this challenge. Everyone has stressed that the process was important, and it was. We all learned a great deal about ourselves as teachers.

However, I was shocked to read that you'll be printing the names of NEA members receiving certification. We were willing to undertake this task for the betterment of our profession, and whether or not we pass this evaluation is a private matter that should only be made public if a teacher wants it known.

Would we publish our students' names along with their test results in local newspapers? No way! Parents would be outraged, and they would have every right to be!

Judy De Angelis
Evans, Colorado

Editor's note: The first teachers to earn national certification are trail blazers. To preserve history, NEA Today *will publish their names in an upcoming issue.*

Racism?

Shame on you! To accuse Charles Murray and the late Richard Herrnstein (Heroes and Zeroes, December) of racism because their book reaches a conclusion that you disagree with is despicable.

Unfortunately, trying to smear two highly respected social scientists by labeling them as racist is not the end of your vindictiveness. You erroneously assert that all reputable scientists feel that there is no genetically caused difference in intelligence among the races. That is simply not true, and I strongly suspect you know better.

Geoffrey Cowley's article from the October 24 issue of *Newsweek* notes that "the science behind the Bell Curve is overwhelmingly mainstream." That same article also states that psychologist Arthur Jensen's view that there are racial differences in I.Q. is more mainstream among the scientific community than are views such as yours.

It reeks of hypocrisy for your publication to constantly preach about the need for racial and gender diversity but to regard intellectual diversity as threatening. With your attitude, had you been publishing in 1632, you would have called for the burning of Galileo.

Kurt Maas
Coggon, Iowa

Education Choices

Shannon Faulkner in *NEA Today*! If Shannon wanted the type of education fostered by the Citadel, why doesn't she apply to West Point, Annapolis, or the Air Force or Coast Guard Academies? These fine schools are not only coeducational but actively seek qualified women applicants.

For over a century, both the Citadel and VMI have produced outstanding leaders for our country. Why do so many people want to fix everything that isn't broken? The hatchet job done on the Citadel in the *New Yorker* is easily dismissed as biased reporting by an author who made up her mind even before she visited the school.

But the NEA (Legal Times, December)? Would you be as sympathic to a man who applied to Smith, Wells, or Mt. Holyoke? Evidence suggests that single-sex women's college are viable educational insititutions, and I'm sure each of these institutions receive some public money. Fair is fair: you can't have it both ways.

Bill Gleason
Amherst, Massachusetts

Bad Tip

I was disappointed to read a teacher tip in "Idea Exchange" (November) suggesting that students be rewarded for their parents' attendance at open house and conference time with an *A* to be used in place of a low grade or homework.

While encouraging parents' attendance is certainly a worthy goal, this isn't the way to do it.

First of all, students don't really have control over their parents—nor should they. Why then should students be rewarded (or punished) for their parents' actions?

Second, consider the message that we're sending our students when we issue these credits: the assignment is something that not every student has to do—just use the pass.

I constantly try to impress upon my students the importance of every assignment and explain that the extra practice is vital to academic success. The use of passes merely reinforces the idea that homework isn't designed to benefit students but rather to punish them.

Brian Major
Elysburg, Pennsylvania

One Woman's Role

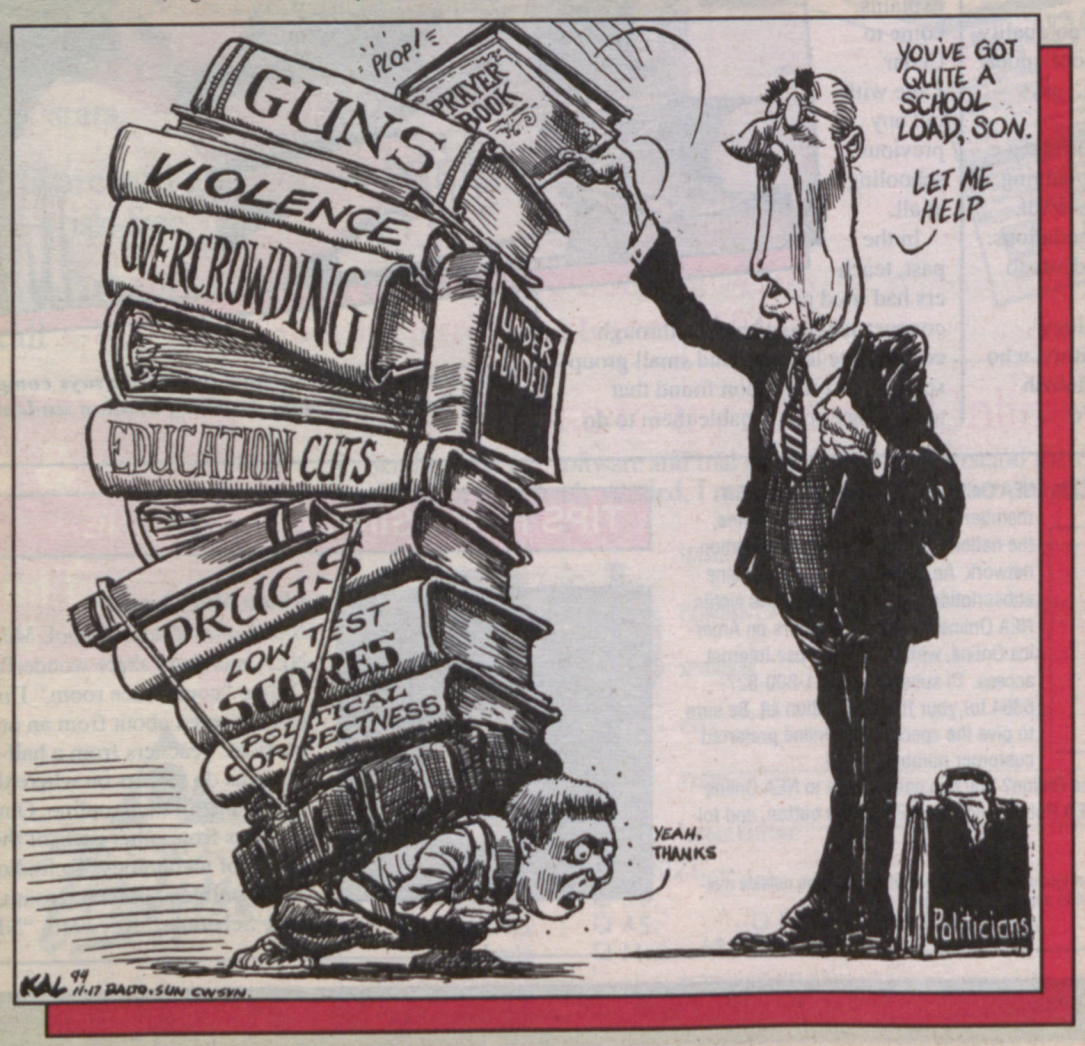
In response to your question, "Why don't more women teachers move into administrative roles?" (Trends, November), I can only speak for myself.

I've never wanted anything other than to teach children. I really feel I can make a difference in children's lives. The higher up the ladder one goes, the less contact with children, the less desirable the job for me.

After 24 years of teaching, I've also noticed that being an administrator may not give you the control you seek. I see principals caught in the middle of the desires of the school board, district administrators, teachers, parents, and students. It's very difficult to please all of the people all of the time.

By being involved as an elementary rep-at-large in my local teaching organization, Capistrano Unified Education Association, I can accomplish things that make things better for teachers and students districtwide. Although I don't get paid a principal's salary, the satisfaction I get from teaching students and helping in the Association far outweigh any money I would receive.

April Wilsey
Mission Viejo, California



Speak Up

I was greatly disappointed by the failure of *NEA Today* to write about California's controversial Proposition 187 prior to the election. I believe NEA has the responsibility to speak out on a question that could translate into the exclusion of hundreds of thousands of children from the classroom and impose upon teachers the undesirable role of informers.

No matter where one stands on illegal immigration, the education of large numbers of children living within the borders of the United States is at stake.

In a country that once exhibited proud leadership on the availability of public education for all, it is the responsibility of educators and those who represent them to uphold the sacred principle that declares knowledge as everyone's most basic and liberating right.

Luisiana Melendez Rojas
Streamwood, Illinois

Kudos

I would like to thank *NEA Today* for the article about my recent First Amendment court victory (Legal Times, October).

Response to the article has been excellent. I've received letters from as far away as Alaska and calls from California to Charleston.

Having been a member of the SCEA and NEA for decades, I always believed that if I really needed them, they would be there—and they were, attempting to save my credibility. On behalf of all the teachers in the United States, for defending the U.S. Constitution and Free Speech, I commend you.

My latest project is writing of my ordeals in a book I have titled *Affirmed: Autobiography of a Teacher Under Fire*. I hope that if this book is published, it will motivate more teachers to fight within the system to improve the profession for their students, for themselves, and for future generations.

Maggi Hall
Marion, South Carolina

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Debate

Should Schools Offer All-Girl Math Classes?

YES

Pam Belitski, a member of the Ventura Unified Education Association, teaches seventh- and eighth-grade math at Anacapa Middle School in Ventura, California. Three of her classes consist of all girls; one is coed. Belitski's two teenage sons are proud of her gender-equity advocacy.

Creating all-girl math classes in middle school to boost girls' achievement and create equal opportunity may seem extreme, but research—and my own experience—shows it works.

At my school, optional all-girl math classes were established last year. Since then, enrollment has skyrocketed from 30 to 90 girls.

Such classes offer an opportunity for girls to develop problem-solving skills, become divergent thinkers, increase their self-esteem and confidence in math ability, and become aware of gender and stereotyping issues without the distraction of boys.

The learning style of girls is different from that of boys—research supports this and the girls in my classes agree. To accommodate the way girls think through math problems, my teaching in all-girl classes is more concept-oriented than number-oriented.

Also, the atmosphere is a lot less competitive and a lot more cooperative.

In these classes, I also try to develop the girls' questioning skills. Sometimes girls ask questions and, although they know what they want to say, the words just don't come out right. Middle school is the time to address this problem.

Another reason why all-girl math classes work best in middle schools is that these are the years when most students make important decisions about their futures—decisions in large part related to their success or failure in math class.

As teachers, it becomes our job to build positive attitudes and math skills in girls before they drop out of the math program—and exclude themselves from many college majors and many high paying, satisfying careers.

Two recent studies—*How Schools Shortchange Girls* (AAUW, 1992) and ***Failing at Fairness*** (Myra and David Sadker, Macmillan, 1994)—shed light on the issue.

The studies found that from preschool to university, teachers in the majority of classrooms across the country give more attention and encouragement to boys than to girls.

Most of the time, we teachers are unaware of the extra attention we give to boys—attention paid primarily to achieve classroom control.

The Sadker study points out that teachers typically use a different pattern of questioning and praise for girls than for boys.

It would be ideal to train educators to teach more equitably—but that would be a monumental and very expensive task. In the meantime, it makes sense to implement all-girl math classes.

Based on research and evaluation (*Mathematics and Gender,* Fennema, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1990), we know the strategies that succeed in getting girls to take more math.

We know the following tactics work:

➤Intervention in the seventh and eighth grade. That's when kids make decisions about whether or not to take algebra, an important step to future math involvement. Schools need to develop programs showing that algebra can be fun and that girls can be successful at math.

➤Intervention in ninth and tenth grade. The sophomore year is another key decision-making point. Girls are more likely to stop taking math during this year than boys.

➤The establishment of math programs that address girls' needs. In 1990, the Campbell-Kibler Associates report "Eureka" found that girls continued studying math after participating in classes where they perceived the atmosphere to be relaxed, noncompetitive, and more fun than normal, and where they perceived that teachers took extra time to explain concepts and answer questions.

We know that all-girl math classes established at the right time will work—and will work right now.

Taking the long view, teachers need to work in tandem with researchers and practitioners to develop math reform that ensures equity. Merely to acknowledge that gender inequities exist does a grave injustice to girls—and to society's future.

NO

Ed Bleeden has been teaching math at Maine Township High School South in Park Ridge, Illinois for the past 27 years. Bleeden is a member of the Illinois Education Association-NEA and serves on the bargaining team for his local, the Maine (Illinois) Teachers Association.

Those who advocate segregating the sexes when teaching mathematics see single-sex classes as an opportunity for girls to increase their proficiency in math. But I hold the opposite view. I believe that single-sex classes actually take opportunities away from girls.

Why? The higher performing math students are mostly boys. So in all-girl math classes, there are few positive role models. We argue that a lack of role models is a reason to eliminate homogeneously grouped classes—and, in essence, isn't segregation by sex a form of homogeneous grouping?

Also, because most of the higher achieving math students are boys, higher achieving girls in all-girl classes are denied the opportunity to compete with the best students. Teamwork may be in vogue, but there's still motivation in each of us to be the best.

Many people view schools as a microcosm of the real world—a place where students prepare for life. Doesn't it follow, then, that school situations should model the real world? Separation of boys and girls isn't a part of that real world.

Let's look at a real-world analogy. Suppose an employee isn't working up to his or her potential. Should the company remove from the workplace fellow employees who are doing their jobs commensurate with their ability?

More than likely, the company will either fire the underachieving employee or assess the situation and attempt to find the cause of the problem.

If the cause is identified, a solution will be sought.

Granted, one possible solution to the situation of underachieving female students would be to segregate math classes by sex. But this is not the best solution—too much is lost with this approach.

Boys and girls need to be around each other so they can learn how to relate in all types of situations. They're going to be interacting with each other throughout their lives—separating them won't help girls learn to hold their own.

A remedy must be found that doesn't teach these kids that if there's a problem between two groups of people, the way to solve it is to separate them. That's the last thing we need to be teaching our young people.

Research has shown that in math classes girls are called upon less often and asked fewer questions than their male counterparts.

They also speak less than boys in class. The speculation is that if the girls were drawn more into the classroom dialogue they would do better.

We, as teachers, need to respond to the challenge—without segregated classes. We need to make a conscious effort to involve our female students more in our classes. We need to know if we're unconsciously slighting girls. And, if observers say we are, we need to retrain ourselves to question all students equally and elicit responses from all.

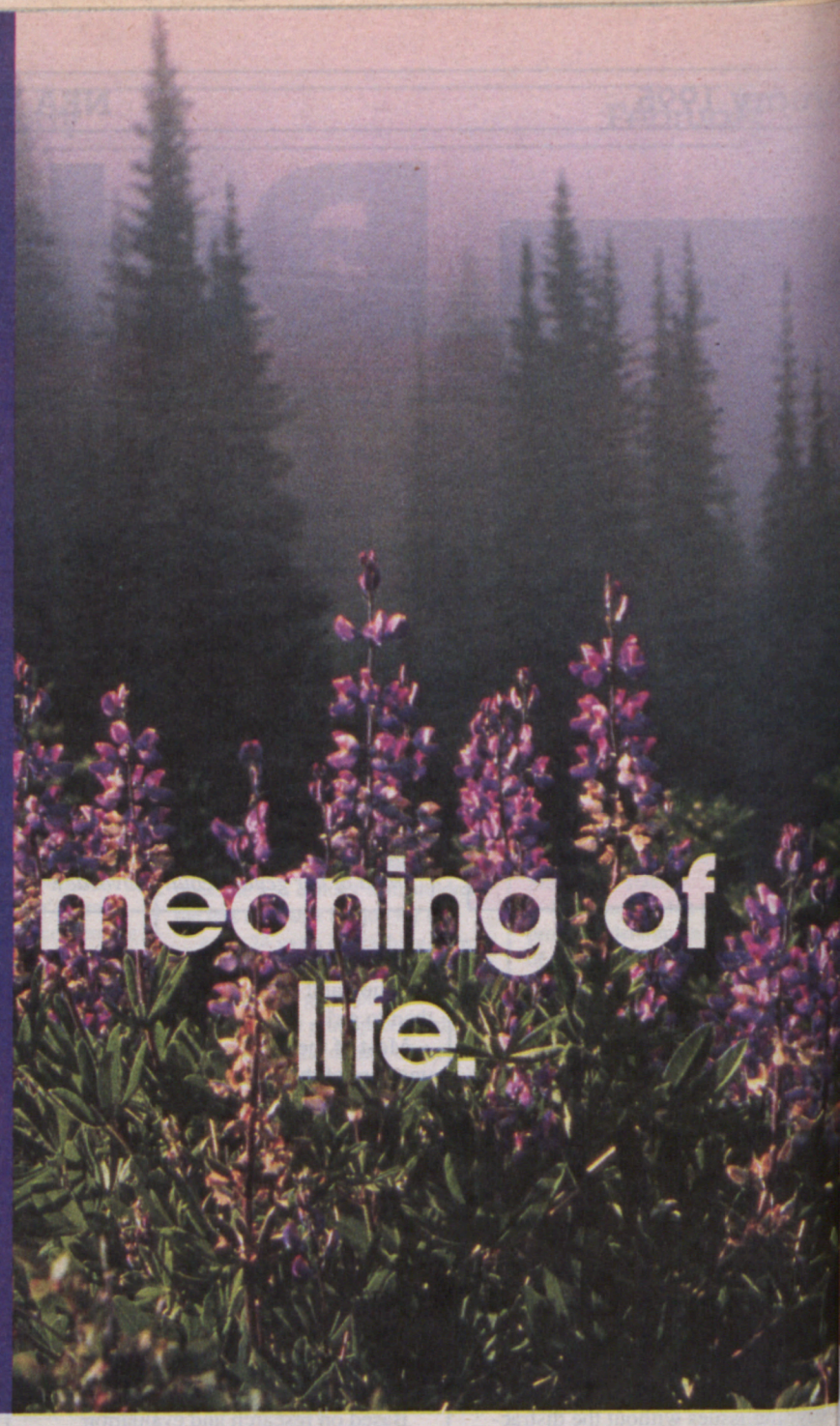
We must teach all our students to think and process information, formulate ideas, and feel comfortable enough within the classroom environment to share their thoughts with their classmates.

Another point: we need to make sure that our math and science textbooks are gender balanced. For every word problem in a mathematics text that includes male-dominated interests—like baseball batting averages—there should be a problem that is of more interest to females.

Certainly there are girls who are interested in baseball and boys who are not. But if someone has to struggle to understand the literal content of a word problem, how can that person be expected to deal successfully with the math content?

Why aren't girls getting the attention they need? I don't believe it's intentional. Maybe it's gender bias in the materials we use. Maybe it's because the boys in math and science classes demand more attention.

But whatever the cause, training math teachers to be more responsive to the academic needs of their female students is certainly a better solution than segregating the sexes.



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